BLACK WIDOW & HAWKEYE

"The art team deliver on creating a world of danger amongst an emotional bond."

— Nerd Initiative

PHILLIPS
VILLANELLI
IACONO

BROKEN ARROW

MARVEL

BLACK WIDOW & HAWKEYE

BROKEN ARROW

BLACK WIDOW & HAWKEYE

BROKEN ARROW

EVEN WHEN BLACK WIDOW AND HAWKEYE HAD NO ONE TO TRUST, THEY STILL HAD EACH OTHER. ONCE VILLAINS, NOW HEROES, BOTH NATASHA AND CLINT HAVE OCCASIONALLY STUMBLED IN THEIR ASPIRATIONS TO STAY ON THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW. BUT NOW BLACK WIDOW HAS A SYMBIOTE COMPANION WHISPERING IN HER EAR, AND HAWKEYE IS RACING TOWARD A FALL...

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SIBERIA.

VREMENI BOL'SHE NET! OTRYADY DOLZHNY BYT' PODGOTOVLENY--

UFF!

CHTO--?

ARRGH!

BITE. BITE. BITE. BITE.

NOT YET...

HE DESERVES A *CHANCE* TO SPEAK FOR HIMSELF.

THE **BLACK WIDOW.**

MY SYMBIOTE SPIDERS ARE ***HUNGRY***, MIKHAIL.

EITHER YOU CAN TELL ME WHAT I WANT TO KNOW, OR THEY WILL ***RETRIEVE*** THE INFORMATION FOR ME.

THE TARGET YOU WERE PAID TO KILL...***WHERE*** IS HE?

WHERE HE ***BELONGS***, WIDOW. CLINT BARTON--THE ONE YOU CALL ***HAWKEYE***...

...HE IS ***ROTTING*** IN HELL.

I DO NOT ***BELIEVE*** YOU.

TSK. BELIEF DOES NOT CHANGE ***FACT***, DOROGAYA.

I THOUGHT I HAD MORE TIME.

MAYBE I'M SLOWER SINCE ACCEPTING A NEW *TENANT* INTO MY BODY.

THE SYMBIOTE IS AN ASSET, THAT IS *UNDENIABLE*. BUT IT IS A NEW PASSENGER...

...A *PARTNER* THAT SEES MY VULNERABILITIES LIKE *NO ONE* ELSE...

...NOT EVEN *CLINT*.

SHOW ME HIS MIND.

YUM, YUM.

...I SEE...

OUR RUSSIAN ASSASSIN WAS IN *MADRIPOOR*.

I CAN SEE HIS MEMORIES... SEE HIM BOARDING THE PRIVATE JET...STOPPING TO...*FRATERNIZE* WITH THE LOCALS...

AND I CAN SEE *CLINT*. HE'S--

DEAD?

THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION, BUT...I--I DON'T KNOW...

UNTIL I SEE THE BODY, I *HAVE* TO BELIEVE...

24 HOURS AGO.
MADRIPOOR.

I'M DEAD.

WELL, I GUESS THAT *IS* THE POINT OF AN ASSASSIN.

UNGH!

BUT *THIS* PARTICULAR ASSASSIN ALSO PLANS TO FLAY ME AND TURN MY SKIN INTO A WINTER COAT.

HE'S JUST GOT THAT FLAYING, SKIN-WEARING KINDA VIBE.

ARCHER...I'M HERE TO SEND A MESSAGE. I WILL *SKIN* YOU AND COLLECT YOUR HIDE AS A *TROPHY.*

KRAK

I KNEW IT.

AND AS MUCH AS I FIRMLY BELIEVE I COULD MAKE ***WAVES*** IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY...

...I REALLY FEEL LIKE I'M MORE OF A ***COLLECTIBLE SNEAKERS*** KINDA GUY.

THUNK

KRAK

RIBS ARE DEFINITELY BROKEN

NOT FROM MISTER WEAR-YOUR-SKIN-LIKE-A-COAT BUT THE ASSASSIN BEFORE HIM. A BIG GUY WITH A RED MASK AND A MACE.

A FREAKIN' MACE WHICH WOULD'VE BEEN COOL IF HE WASN'T SWINGING IT AT ME.

SO, YEAH. SKIN-FOR-CLOTHES WAS THE FOURTH. NO. FIFTH GUY WHO'S TRIED TO KILL ME IN THE LAST 48 HOURS.

DEET

BUT HE IS THE FIRST ONE TO PLANT A TINY BOMB ON MY BACK WITHOUT MY NOTICING

DEET

THE GOOD NEWS? I'M NOT HAVING A LARGE RUSSIAN WITH BAD BREATH REMOVE MY SKIN

THE BAD?

A LARGE RUSSIAN WITH BAD BREATH JUST BLEW ME UP

36 HOURS AGO.
NEW YORK CITY.

♫♫♩ ♭♫♫♪♩

IT'S A REAL SHAME, SUCH A *PRETTY* YOUNG WOMAN DRINKING ALL ALONE...

...HOW ABOUT YOU LET *ME* BUY YOU A DRINK?

BOBBI MORSE, A.K.A. MOCKINGBIRD, SPY, SUPER HERO. CLINT'S *EX*-WIFE. *NOT* A COMEDIAN.

BUT ONE OF THE FEW PEOPLE I CALL *FRIEND.*

BOBBI.

WHEN I SAW THE NEWS-- WHEN I SAW *CLINT* ON THE NEWS AND WHAT THEY'RE *SAYING* HE DID--I THOUGHT OF CONTACTING BOBBI MYSELF...

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, BOBBI, THOUGH I'M SORRY FOR THE *REASON.*

ME TOO, NAT. AND I WISH I HAD MORE TIME TO DISCUSS IT, BUT THE SECURITY DETAIL ASSIGNED TO *PROTECT* ME HAS PROBABLY ALREADY NOTICED I'M MISSING.

...BUT SHE BEAT ME TO IT.

TELL ME WHAT I CAN *DO.*

THE C.I.A. CLAIMS I CAN'T BE *OBJECTIVE* WHEN IT COMES TO CLINT.

THAT WHATEVER *EXCUSE* OR *JUSTIFICATION* HE GIVES...I WOULD BELIEVE HIM.

AND THEY'RE *RIGHT.*

THINGS WITH THE NEW YORK THUNDERBOLTS WERE GOING SO WELL... THINGS BETWEEN *US* WERE GOING WELL. AND NOW...

...NOW I'VE BEEN PLACED ON *ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE* TO KEEP ME OUT OF THE WAY WHILE THEY *KILL* HIM.

THAT'S IF THE *RUSSIANS* DON'T GET TO HIM FIRST...

SOMETHING SWEET AND *STRONG*...AND IF YOU'VE GOT ONE OF THOSE LITTLE UMBRELLAS...

YOU GOT IT.

WHERE IS HE, BOBBI?

I...I DON'T KNOW *WHERE*, NAT... I'M SORRY. ALL OF MY SECURITY ACCESS HAS BEEN REVOKED. THE ONLY THING I WAS ABLE TO GET WAS A *NAME.*

MIKHAIL.

INTEL SAYS HE'S A RUSSIAN ASSASSIN WHO WAS ARRESTED BY THE F.S.B. AROUND EIGHT YEARS AGO. C.I.A. SURVEILLANCE PICKED HIM UP WALKING AROUND *MOSCOW* YESTERDAY.

HE'S A *FREE* MAN WITH A NEWLY FILLED BANK ACCOUNT THAT HAS BEEN RECEIVING *ANONYMOUS* DEPOSITS EVERY HOUR SINCE HE WAS SPOTTED.

SO WE FOLLOW MIKHAIL AND *HOPE* HE LEADS US TO CLINT.

THERE IS NO "US," NAT. I CAN'T GO WITH YOU.

AND IT'S NOT BECAUSE I DON'T CARE. I DON'T WANT YOU TO THINK--

YOU DON'T HAVE TO EXPLAIN.

I WILL FIND HIM, BOBBI.

IF YOU DO THIS--

I KNOW.

IT'S NOT THE FIRST TIME I'VE MADE AN ENEMY OUT OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, AND I'M SURE IT WON'T BE THE LAST.

BUT YOU KNOW I HAVE TO ASK, BOBBI...

...DO YOU THINK CLINT IS GUILTY?

48 HOURS AGO.

--IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT I INTRODUCE TO YOU THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF RUSSIA AND SOMEONE I AM NOW *PROUD* TO CALL MY COLLEAGUE...

WASHINGTON, DC.

...SERGEI LARIONOV.

THANK YOU ALL FOR THE WARM WELCOME.

I WOULD SAY I'M *HONORED*...

...BUT THE *TRUTH* IS THAT WHAT I FEEL IS MORE LIKE *RELIEF.*

"RELIEF THAT RUSSIA AND THE UNITED STATES HAVE FOUND *COMMON GROUND.*"

AND I CAN *PROMISE* THAT RUSSIA IS COMMITTED TO USING THAT COMMON GROUND TO CONTINUE BUILDING A STRONG RELATIONSHIP.

"AND LIKE ALL GOOD RELATIONSHIPS..."

...OURS WILL BE BUILT ON *TRUST.*

FWOOSH

40 HOURS AGO.
RUSSIA.

YOU'RE FREE TO GO, MIKHAIL.

32 HOURS AGO.
MADRIPOOR.

28 HOURS AGO.
MADRIPOOR.

TAKE THE ARCHER DOWN IF YOU HAVE TO-- PRESIDENT'S ORDERS.

18 HOURS AGO.
RUSSIA.

WHERE IS MIKHAIL?

NOW.

I'M DEAD

NO...WAIT...WOULD I BE ABLE TO *THINK* IF I WAS DEAD?

WOULD I BE IN THIS MUCH *PAIN* IF I WAS DEAD?

PAIN

NOPE. *DEFINITELY* NOT DEAD. AT *LEAST* FOUR BROKEN BONES...THAT I CAN *FEEL*.

THAT CUT ON MY LEG'S GONNA NEED STITCHES. AND MY HEAD...

...FEELS LIKE MY BRAIN'S BEEN PUT IN A BLENDER.

AND AS IF ADDING INSULT TO THE *MANY* INJURIES I'VE CLEARLY SUSTAINED, MY HEARING AID IS BUSTED.

THANKFULLY, I DON'T NEED TO HEAR TO KNOW THAT--

THWOOM

--SOMETHING IS ATTACKING THE AMBULANCE?!

...BUT I *THINK* I'M ABOUT TO MEET ASSASSIN NUMBER SIX.

KRAAAK

THIS MAY SEEM LIKE A WILD GUESS

AW, COME ON.

...I MISS THE OLD DAYS WHEN ASSASSINS JUST HAD GUNS AND NOT KILLER MECHANICAL CLAW ARMS.

SSSSSH

SIMPLER TIMES

WHAK

FOR RUSSIA.

#兵士@

HUH?

...NATASHA?

I'VE BEEN TO THREE DIFFERENT COUNTRIES LOOKING FOR YOU...

...YOU COULDN'T EVEN *ATTEMPT* TO CONTACT ME OR BOBBI?

NOT EVERYTHING HAS TO BE DONE ON YOUR OWN AND IN THE MOST *DIFFICULT* WAY IMAGINABLE, CLINT.

I DON'T NEED TO BE ABLE TO HEAR TO UNDERSTAND WHAT NATASHA'S SAYING

I KNOW I'VE HEARD THIS LECTURE BEFORE

ACTUALLY, I MIGHT PREFER WHEN I CAN'T HEAR IT. HER FACIAL EXPRESSIONS ARE SO FUN TO WATCH... SO TELLING.

AN ODD QUIRK FOR A SPY.

I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE ALIVE.

AND NOW MAKE THAT FIVE BROKEN BONES

WE CAN'T STAY HERE.

THE RUSSIANS KNOW WHERE YOU ARE, *OBVIOUSLY*, AND BOBBI SAYS THE AMERICANS AREN'T FAR BEHIND.

I'D GUESS THERE ARE ALREADY TROOPS ON THE GROUND IN MADRIPOOR, WHICH WILL MAKE GETTING OVER THE BORDER THROUGH ANY *OFFICIAL* CHANNEL IMPOSSIBLE.

I HAVE AN OLD CONTACT I COULD TRY. HE WOULD BE ABLE TO HELP GET US OVER THE BORDER WITHOUT INVOLVING--

BZZT

I'M *NOT* LEAVING.

WHAT?

I APPRECIATE YOU COMING, NATASHA, BUT YOU *SHOULDN'T* HAVE.

AND, YEAH, I KNOW I'D BE DEAD WITHOUT YOU AND THAT...*ALIEN SYMBIOTE PARASITE*, OR *WHATEVER* YOU CALL IT...

...AND DON'T YOU DARE THINK WE AREN'T GOING TO TALK ABOUT *THAT*...

...BUT *MAYBE* IT WOULD'VE BEEN FOR THE BEST IF YOU *DIDN'T* SAVE ME.

I DIDN'T WANT TO DRAG YOU INTO THIS.

YOU *KNOW* YOU'LL LOSE THIS ARGUMENT, SO JUST SAVE US BOTH THE HEADACHE AND DO WHAT I'M TELLING YOU TO--

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. I *NEED* TO BE IN MADRIPOOR... WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE...I NEED TO DEAL WITH IT, AND I NEED TO DEAL WITH IT *ALONE*.

WHETHER YOU'VE BEEN FRAMED OR BRAINWASHED OR CLONED...WE WILL *DEAL* WITH IT *TOGETHER.*

JUST LIKE WE *ALWAYS* DO.

THAT'S THE PROBLEM, NAT.

THINGS CHANGE...*PEOPLE* CHANGE.

AND MAYBE I'M NOT INTERESTED IN OUR *CYCLE* ANYMORE.

OUR CYCLE?

WE DON'T SPEAK UNTIL ONE OF US IS IN *MORTAL DANGER,* AND THEN WE FOREGO *EVERYTHING* FOR ONE ANOTHER.

I DON'T NEED A THERAPIST TO TELL ME THAT THAT'S NOT EXACTLY HEALTHY, NAT.

MAYBE YOU *ARE* A CLONE.

NOT A *CLONE.*

I WAS THERE...

"...I WAS ON THE ROOFTOP ACROSS FROM THE CEREMONY."

THE MINISTER WAS TALKING ABOUT THE TREATY...ABOUT HIS *UNBELIEVABLE* SUCCESS IN REBUILDING A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA...

"...HE WAS TALKING ABOUT A MORE *HOPEFUL* FUTURE."

"I AM SORRY, NAT."

THAT'S WHEN I DID IT.

FWOOSH

DID IT...?

CLINT, WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

THE RUSSIAN MINISTER...

"...I SHOT HIM."

MANY YEARS AGO.

I HAVEN'T BEEN HERE IN *AGES*...

CONEY ISLAND.

...NOT SINCE I QUIT THAT *LOUSY* CIRCUS JOB.

SHOOTING ARROWS TO AMUSE *BORED* TOURISTS.

I WAS GREAT, BUT IT WAS A TERRIBLE ACT.

AND I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS OLD COSTUME STILL *FITS*. I SHOULD WEAR IT MORE OFTEN.

IT'S NO USE, HAWKEYE.

WHEREVER I GO, *THEY* WILL FOLLOW.

IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY. *TRUST ME*, NATASHA.

AND IF THEY KEEP COMING, I WILL KEEP FIGHTING...

I WON'T LET THEM TAKE YOU BACK TO RUSSIA.

IF *ONLY* RUSSIA WAS *ALL* WE HAD TO FEAR, ARCHER.

I WAS A *RED SPY*, CLINT. AND IF YOU CONTINUE TO ASSIST ME...

I KNOW. THE IDEA OF BEING A *TRAITOR*...IT SEEMS UNBEARABLE. BUT I WOULD BE A TRAITOR TEN TIMES OVER IF IT MEANT ENSURING *YOUR* SAFETY.

I *CAN'T* ASK YOU TO STAY. I DON'T KNOW WHERE WE WILL GO OR WHAT WE WILL FACE--

KRSSSSSH

HAWKEYE!

I CAN TELL YOU *EXACTLY* WHAT YOU WILL FACE...

SNAPDRAGON?

MY BOSS MISSES YOU DEARLY, NATASHA.

HE HAS SENT ME TO RETRIEVE YOU WILLINGLY...

...OR BY FORCE.

FWSSSH

KLNK

I CAN KEEP HER BUSY, NATASHA. LEAVE THROUGH THE WINDOW, AND DON'T STOP RUNNING.

THUNK

THOOM

IT'S YOU THEY'RE AFTER, NATASHA.

LEAVE NOW, WHILE I HAVE HER DISTRACTED!

I WILL FIND YOU AGAIN, CLINT BARTON.

I ALWAYS DO.

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WANTED
CLINT BARTON

MADRIPOOR.
ONE WEEK AGO.

YOU'D THINK ARCHERS WOULD MAKE *TERRIBLE* SPIES.

IN MEDIEVAL TIMES, ARCHERS WERE COMMONERS. *PEASANTS.*

SPYING WAS A NOBLEMAN'S PURSUIT.

GOOD EVENING, GENTLEMEN. GOT ROOM AT THE TABLE FOR ONE MORE?

THIS IS A CLOSED GAME--

AND THE CLOSEST A NOBLEMAN WOULD GET TO AN ARCHER WAS TO GIVE THEM *ORDERS.*

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO TALKING WITH YOU, MISTER KOLLER. WHAT YOU'VE MANAGED TO DO WITH K.R.V. TECH...THE DEALS YOU'VE MADE SUPPLYING WEAPONS TO SOME OF THE WORLD'S LEADING--

ARCHERS WERE MEANT TO GO FIRST. RAIN ARROWS DOWN ON THE APPROACHING ENEMY FROM A DISTANCE...

YOU'RE GOING TO NEED TO *LEAVE.*

IT'S ALL RIGHT...LET HIM BE.

HE'S JUST YOUNG AND *NAIVE.*

NOT PUT THEMSELVES FACE-TO-FACE WITH THE PEOPLE WHO WANT TO KILL THEM.

LET ME GUESS... YOU USED *EVERY* PENNY TO YOUR NAME TO GET INTO THIS EVENT JUST TO PITCH ME SOME NEW PRODUCT THAT YOU THINK WILL PUT YOU AND YOUR *YET-TO-BE-NAMED* START-UP COMPANY *ON THE MAP?*

IS IT *THAT* OBVIOUS?

SON, YOUR BOWTIE'S CROOKED.

WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

HARRY, SIR...HARRY BARNES.

AND WHILE ARCHERS GOT THE REPUTATION OF BEING *COWARDS*...

WE *THRIVE* ON BEING *UNDERESTIMATED*

LET'S PLAY A ROUND, HARRY.

I'LL SPOT YOU, *AND* I'LL MAKE YOU A DEAL.

IN THIS BUSINESS, WE DON'T SUPPLY *WEAPONS*, WE SUPPLY *DEFENSE.*

IF YOU WIN... YOU CAN GIVE ME YOUR BIG PITCH ON HOW YOU'RE GOING TO *CHANGE THE WORLD OF DEFENSE FOREVER.*

BUT CREDIT WHERE CREDIT'S DUE. WITH ALL THIS SPY STUFF, IT ALSO HELPS THAT I HAPPEN TO KNOW A COUPLE OF SPIES

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE OPPOR--

I EVEN MARRIED ONE

OH NO!

HEY!

SPLASH

AND EVEN THOUGH WE'RE DIVORCED

MOCKINGBIRD WAS NICE ENOUGH TO LET ME BORROW SOME STATE OF THE ART SPY TECH

I'M SO SORRY, MISTER KOLLER. I'LL GET THAT!

HERE, JUST LET ME--

DON'T TOUCH ME!

LIKE THIS LITTLE TRACKING DEVICE, WHICH IS PERFECT FOR FOLLOWING WEAPONS MANUFACTURERS ON THE VERGE OF MAKING SOME SKETCHY DEALS

GET HIM OUT OF HERE.

NO, SIR. I'M SORRY...PLEASE. GIVE ME ANOTHER CHANCE TO--

MADRIPOOR.
NOW.

I NEED TWO ORDERS OF DUMPLINGS AND ONE ORDER OF--

ORDER 89!

HEY! WHAT ARE YOU...?

...HOW ARE YOU...?

I HOPE ORDER 89 GOT SOMETHING GOOD. I'M *STARVING.*

NATASHA...

OKAY, YOUR OPTIONS ARE CHICKEN SKEWERS, DUMPLINGS OR--

NAT. STOP.

YOU *HAVE* TO LEAVE.

AS SOON AS YOU TELL ME THE *TRUTH* ABOUT THE RUSSIAN DIPLOMAT'S DEATH AND I'M ASSURED YOU *DON'T* NEED MY HELP DEFENDING AGAINST THE *MANY* PEOPLE WHO NOW WANT *YOU* DEAD...

...THEN MAYBE I'LL *THINK* ABOUT THE *POSSIBILITY* OF LEAVING, CLINT.

SERIOUSLY, YOU SHOULD TAKE A SKEWER BEFORE I EAT THEM ALL. THEY'RE *AMAZING.*

I *TOLD* YOU WHAT HAPPENED. I KILLED THE FOREIGN MINISTER.

HE'S LYING.

I *KNOW* HE'S LYING.

WHAT ARE YOU--?

I WILL FIND THE TRUTH.

WHAT THE HELL?!

I CAN FEEL YOUR CONNECTION. DEEP.

HAS CAUSED YOU PAIN. WILL AGAIN.

NATASHA?!

ENOUGH. YOU WILL *NOT* TOUCH HIM.

NOT. NOW. NOT. *EVER.*

I'M SORRY, CLINT.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND, NAT. IS THAT THING...*INSIDE* OF YOU?

THE SYMBIOTE IS A *PART* OF ME...*CONNECTED* TO ME.

SOUNDS LIKE IT'S A BIT JEALOUS OF *OUR* CONNECTION.

NOT THAT IT'S A *COMPETITION* OR ANYTHING, BUT I WAS HERE *LONG* BEFORE THAT SCI-FI GOOP--

THWP

POISON...

ENEMY NEARBY.

SYMBIOTE! DID YOU **KNOW** THERE WAS SOMEONE HERE? DID YOU KNOW AND NOT WARN US *INTENTIONALLY?*

HE SAID TO LEAVE. SHOULD HAVE LISTENED.

WE ARE NOT LEAVING.

THAT UNIFORM DOESN'T LOOK AMERICAN OR RUSSIAN.

THERE'S A... *FAMILIARITY.* BUT I CAN'T QUITE PLACE IT.

HOW DEEP ARE YOU, CLINT...?

BLAM

BLAM

I CAN TASTE IT. THE POISON. ITS CHEMICAL MAKEUP...

...IT IS UNIQUE.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

IT MEANS THAT IT WILL KILL CLINT BARTON.

CLINT.

ARGH!

CLINT!

AGH...

STAY WITH ME...

-KOFF-

YOU *ABSORBED* THE POISON WHEN I WAS HIT WITH IT.

CAN YOU ALSO *EXTRACT* IT FROM CLINT?

YOU WANT ME TO *HELP* CLINT BARTON.

IF YOU CARED ABOUT *ME*, YOU WOULD CARE ABOUT *HIM*.

DOING *NOTHING* MEANS HE *DIES*.

ENTERING ANOTHER. THERE COULD BE CONSEQUENCES.

WHO IS CLINT BARTON?

WHAT...?

FOCUS. ON CLINT.

TELL ME, NATASHA.

LET ME SEE HIM.

THE FIRST TIME I GOT CLOSE TO CLINT BARTON...

CONEY ISLAND.
MANY YEARS AGO.

...I UNDERESTIMATED HIM.

KRAK

I HAD LEARNED TO USE MEN--TO USE *PEOPLE*-- AS A MEANS TO AN END.

NO EMOTIONS. JUST *USEFULNESS.*

I THINK CLINT KNEW THAT-- HE *SENSED* IT--THAT GETTING CLOSE TO ME WOULD BE DIFFICULT AND *PAINFUL.*

ROBIN HOOD TOLD YOU TO LEAVE, NATASHA. *WHY* DIDN'T YOU LISTEN?

WHAT DO YOU *WANT,* SNAPDRAGON? *WHO* SENT YOU?

BUT HE DID IT *ANYWAY.*

MY *BOSS* WILL TELL YOU SOON ENOUGH, WIDOW.

THWACK

AGH!

THUK

GET AWAY FROM HER.

I WAS TOLD ABOUT YOU...

...THE ARCHER WITH *PERFECT* AIM.

BUT I HAVE SEEN *NO* EVIDENCE OF YOUR PROWESS.

THE ARCHER WHO *NEVER* MISSES.

A BOW IS A *FOOL'S* WEAPON.

WHERE ARE YOUR *MERRY MEN,* FOOL?

UNGH!

THUNK

THWACK

SOMETIMES I THINK CLINT *LIKES* BEING TOLD *NO*...

SNAPDRAGON, READY FOR EXTRACTION.

...BEING TOLD THAT HE WILL *FAIL*...

...BECAUSE *THAT* IS CLINT'S *TRUE* POWER.

A *FOOL'S* WEAPON...

HE *THRIVES* ON BEING UNDERESTIMATED.

...AND AN ARROW ARMED WITH A *TRACKING* BEACON.

"I *WILL* FIND YOU, BLACK WIDOW."

NO...STAY WITH ME, CLINT...

NO, NO, NO.

HIS *HEART*... I CAN'T FEEL HIS HEARTBEAT...

PLEASE... SAVE HIM. YOU HAVE TO--

NATASHA?

HAWKEYE IS DEAD?

I...I SHOT HIM, SIR.

IS HE DEAD?

HE...HE WAS *POISONED.* I DON'T KNOW *HOW* HE COULD SURVIVE IT.

THERE'S NO WAY HE COULD--

YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO *CONFIRM*, DAMMIT!

WHERE IS THE BODY?

I WAS INTERRUPTED, SIR. I'M SO SORRY, BUT THIS WOMAN...I COULDN'T STOP HER.

I SHOT HER, AND IT WAS LIKE-- LIKE *NOTHING* HAPPENED. SHE HAD A BLACK SUIT AND...

...*RED HAIR?*

YES...RED HAIR. HOW DID YOU--?

SHE REALLY CAN'T HELP HERSELF...

DID SHE *TOUCH* YOU?

...*HRGN*... SIR?

DID NATASHA ROMANOFF LAY HER *HANDS* ON YOU?

SHE... *HRGN*...GRABBED ME...

...DIDN'T... HURT...

I'M GLAD IT DIDN'T HURT.

BUT THIS WILL...

AAARGH!

SIR?!

SHE KNOWS WHERE WE ARE.

WHO DOES, SIR?

THE BLACK WIDOW.

SHE NO DOUBT PUT A TRACKER ON THE UNFORTUNATE MAN I JUST THREW OUT THE WINDOW.

THEN WE SHOULD MOVE, SIR. I CAN HAVE THE PLANE READY FOR TAKEOFF IN--

NO.

LET HER COME.

I'M SURE SHE'S *DYING* FOR A REUNION WITH

DAMON DRAN.

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RUSSIAN EMBASSY. THEN.

IT STARTED WITH AN ARCHER.

EROS TO SOME, *CUPID* TO OTHERS. THE GOD OF LOVE.

ACCORDING TO THE MYTH, THE GOD APOLLO *MOCKED* EROS' ARCHERY SKILLS.

THNK

WHY WOULD A GOD OF *LOVE* AND *PASSION* REQUIRE TOOLS OF *WAR?*

HUH?

THIS *ENRAGED* EROS, WHO SOUGHT HIS REVENGE BY SHOOTING *TWO* ARROWS.

HSSSSSS

THE FIRST ARROW, TIPPED WITH *GOLD*, STRUCK APOLLO IN THE HEART...

...FILLING HIM WITH AN *INSATIABLE* DESIRE FOR A BEAUTIFUL NYMPH NAMED DAPHNE.

THE SECOND ARROW, TIPPED WITH LEAD, STRUCK *DAPHNE*...

...AND FILLED HER WITH A *DEEP* HATRED FOR APOLLO.

NO MATTER HOW MUCH HE PURSUED HER, DAPHNE COULD NEVER RETURN APOLLO'S AFFECTIONS.

I'M COMING, NATASHA!

SO APOLLO CONSTANTLY LONGED FOR SOMEONE WHO WAS *INCAPABLE* OF LOVING HIM BACK.

WHAT COULD BE MORE *PAINFUL?*

*HAWKEYE, DID YOU **MEAN** TO KNOCK OUT AN ARMED GUARD IN ORDER TO SNEAK INTO THE RUSSIAN EMBASSY...?*

BECAUSE, IF NOT, THIS IS REALLY AWKWARD.

IRON MAN?

YOU'D NEVER **GUESS** HOW MANY TIMES THIS PLACE IS MISTAKEN FOR A **BURGER JOINT.**

THEY SHOULD PUT UP A SIGN...

...OR HANG SOME KIND OF FLAG.

STAY OUT OF THIS, IRON MAN.

YOU KNOW I CAN'T DO THAT, CUPID.

BLACK WIDOW IS A RUSSIAN OPERATIVE, HAWKEYE.

THIS IS NOT OUR BUSINESS.

YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED...? YOU KNOW THAT SNAPDRAGON TOOK NATASHA...?

AND YOU'RE... OKAY WITH IT? HOW--?

BECAUSE IT'S WHAT'S BEST FOR EVERYONE, KID.

COME ON... EVEN YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THAT.

THE U.S. CAN'T JUST ALLOW A SOVIET SPY TO... WHAT? BUY A HOUSE ON AMERICAN SOIL? GET A JOB AS A WAITRESS?

THEY WILL KILL HER.

LOOK, I GET IT. YOU CARE ABOUT HER.

BETTER MEN THAN YOU HAVE FALLEN FOR THOSE EYES.

BUT SHE IS INCAPABLE OF DOING ANYTHING MORE THAN USING YOU.

NOW LET'S GET OFF THIS ROOF BEFORE YOU DO SOMETHING THAT YOU'LL...

THNK

...REGRET.

SERIOUSLY? I JUST POLISHED THIS--

ZOOM

YOU SHOULD HAVE TOLD ME YOU INVITED YOUR MOST RECENT *ADMIRER*, NATASHA...

...I WOULD HAVE SET ANOTHER PLACE AT THE TABLE.

NOW, WE WERE TALKING ABOUT YOUR *IMMINENT* RETURN *HOME*, I BELIEVE.

THERE ARE THOSE WHO BELIEVE YOUR DEATH SHOULD BE *SWIFT* AND WOULD BE *JUSTIFIED*.

IF I'M BEING HONEST, THE *MAJORITY* BELIEVE THAT.

BUT THE *MAJORITY* CAN'T APPRECIATE YOUR TALENTS, *BLACK WIDOW*.

WHICH IS WHY I WOULD *PREFER* TO MAKE YOU AN OFFER YOU LITERALLY *CAN'T* REFUSE...

...WORK FOR ME, AND YOUR LIFE WILL BE SPARED.

I WOULD RATHER DIE THAN DO *ANYTHING* FOR YOU, *DAMON DRAN*.

AND YOU SHOULD BE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR *OWN* LIFE...

"...BECAUSE *HAWKEYE* IS HERE TO *END* IT."

HRRRCK!

MADRIPOOR. NOW.

WE'RE OUT OF WATER.

I'LL JUST THROW IT UP ANYWAY.

GOOD.

YOU ***NEED*** TO GET THE TOXINS OUT OF YOUR SYSTEM, CLINT.

ARE YOU REFERRING TO THE POISON THAT THE ***ASSASSIN*** SHOT ME WITH OR THE SYMBIOTE THAT ***YOU*** ALLOWED INSIDE OF ME?

THE SYMBIOTE SAVED YOUR *LIFE.*

AT WHAT *COST?*

DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHAT THAT THING IS GOING TO *DO* TO ME?

WILL IT... TURN *ME* INTO A *MONSTER?*

YOU MEAN LIKE IT DID TO *ME?*

NAT, THAT'S NOT WHAT I--

WHAT HAPPENED TO ME ***WON'T*** HAPPEN TO YOU. YOU ONLY CAME IN CONTACT WITH A ***SMALL*** PORTION OF THE SYMBIOTE.

BUT THE SYMBIOTE *DID* WARN ME THAT THERE COULD BE POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS...

WHEN I FIRST BONDED WITH THE SYMBIOTE, IT ENHANCED CERTAIN... ***FEELINGS.***

ANGER, JEALOUSY, MISTRUST...ALL FELT ***HEIGHTENED,*** AND IT TOOK A LITTLE BIT TO LEARN TO ***CONTROL*** MY EMOTIONAL RESPONSES.

I DON'T FEEL ANYTHING LIKE THAT. I JUST FEEL--

HRGN!

YOU NEED WATER, CLINT.

THERE'S A MARKET AROUND THE CORNER. I'LL BE *RIGHT* BACK.

ANGER.

WHAT--?

GUILT.

CONSUMING.

GET OUT OF MY HEAD.

HERE BECAUSE OF YOU.

HERE TO HELP YOU.

WEAK.

BROKEN.

SHUT UP!

YOU NEED HER.

BUT SHE DOES NOT NEED--

SHUT UP!

KRRSH

OKAY, I GOT WATER, AND THE SHOP DOWN THE STREET HAD THESE TABLETS FOR NAUSEA THAT I THINK WILL HELP--

CLINT?

CLINT, YOU IDIOT...

I WARNED YOU NOT TO LISTEN TO THE SYMBIOTE.

RUSSIAN EMBASSY. THEN.

FREEZE!

DROP YOUR WEAPON!

DOES...DOES HE HAVE A BOW AND ARROW?

YES, HE DOES.

FWSSH

ARGH!

BLAM

WHAK

DON'T MOVE!

THK

THWSSSSH

WHAT THE--?!

I CAN'T MOVE!

"THE *ARCHER* IS INSIDE THE BUILDING..."

...WE TRIED TO STOP HIM, BUT HE HAS *ARROWS* THAT CAN--

I WILL DEAL WITH IT.

WATCH HER.

HEY.

DON'T TALK.

I WAS HOPING YOU COULD HELP ME.

I HAVE THIS *ITCH*... ON MY NECK... I CAN'T QUITE REACH.

DO YOU THINK YOU COULD GET IT?

NICE TRY. I'M NOT AN *IDIOT.*

COULD HAVE FOOLED ME.

SNAP

BLAM

THAT'S BETTER...

SCRTCH

THWK

MADRIPOOR. NOW.

SCARED.

OBVIOUSLY. BUT I'M DOING THE RIGHT THING...THE *ONLY* THING.

NATASHA IS *ALWAYS* THE ONE MAKING SACRIFICES.

NOW IT'S *MY* TURN TO HELP NATASHA.

DING

CAN SENSE THEM... CAN SMELL THEM.

BITTER.

METALLIC.

CLOSE.

CLOSE? THERE'S NO ONE EVEN IN--

BLAM

AGH!

PROBLEM.

IS YOUR *ONLY* ABILITY TO STATE THE OBVIOUS?

WHAT--?

DAMON?

I GOT YOUR MESSAGE, HAWKEYE... THAT YOU'D LIKE TO **TALK.**

SO, TALK...

...BEFORE MY MEN **FINISH** THE JOB.

I'M HERE TO **END** IT, DAMON...TO GIVE YOU WHAT YOU WANT.

TAKE ME.

KILL ME... USE ME... DOESN'T MATTER...

YOUR LITTLE **STUNT** WITH THE RUSSIAN DIPLOMAT HASN'T **STOPPED** US, ARCHER.

WAR IS **INEVITABLE.**

...I JUST DON'T WANT **ANYONE** ELSE INVOLVED.

YOU MEAN LIKE **NATASHA ROMANOFF.**

YOU ARE A **TERRIBLE** NEGOTIATOR, ARCHER.

WHY WOULD I **EVER** WANT **YOU?**

YOU SHOULD HAVE DIED WHEN WE POISONED YOU.

AND YET... HERE YOU STAND, NO THANKS TO YOUR OWN ACTIONS, OF COURSE.

WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

WEAK.

BROKEN.

YOU NEED HER.

YOU NEED HER, CLINT. YOU NEED THE BLACK WIDOW.

BUT SHE DOES NOT NEED YOU.

WEAK.

YOU'D BE NOTHING WITHOUT HER.

HE KNOWS THE TRUTH.

UNGH!

AND THANKS TO YOU...

"...I WILL GET ANOTHER CHANCE TO *KILL* NATASHA ROMANOFF."

HE KNOWS YOU ARE WORTHLESS.

4

I'M DEAD.

NO.

HURT.

LET ME DIE

YOU WANT TO GIVE UP.

ADMIT YOUR FAILURES.

I DON'T NEED TO ADMIT ANYTHING

MY FAILURES ARE OBVIOUS

I LED NATASHA TO MADRIPOOR

:KOFF:

...THIS GAME OF CAT AND MOUSE.

THE FALLEN HERO.

THE DRAMATIC RESCUES...

THE SUPER VILLAIN WHO MONOLOGUES WAY TOO LONG ABOUT HIS MOTIVATIONS.

WE ARE TRAPPED IN A VICIOUS CYCLE.

AND THEN I LED DAMON DRAN TO NATASHA

WE'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE, CLINT...

LET ME DOWN AND I'LL HAPPILY END THAT VICIOUS CYCLE FOR YOU, DAMON.

YOU CAME TO ME, HAWKEYE.

YOU CAME BEGGING THAT I TAKE YOUR LIFE IN EXCHANGE FOR THE BLACK WIDOW'S.

A SACRIFICE THAT, LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE YOU DO, IS USELESS--

NATASHA HAS KILLED YOU *ONCE* ALREADY, DRAN.

HRGN!

KLAK

BAD IDEA.

WE'LL SEE HOW *INDESTRUCTIBLE* YOU REALLY ARE...

ONLY MAKING IT WORSE.

SHUT UP!

HRGK!

SIR!

I WANT... -KOFF-...YOUR GUNS ON HIM *AT ALL TIMES.*

NATASHA ROMANOFF WILL BE HERE SOON TO COLLECT HER *BELOVED* ARCHER...

"...OR WHAT'S *LEFT* OF HIM."

RUSSIAN EMBASSY. THEN.

UNGH...

KRAK

ARGH!

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH ***NATASHA***, DAMON?

FUNNY, BECAUSE IT DOESN'T ***LOOK*** LIKE YOU'RE IN A POSITION TO BE ***DEMANDING*** ANSWERS.

IF ***YOU*** WON'T ANSWER HIM...

...I WILL.

FWSSSH

HRCK!

WHAK

THIS IS THE MOMENT IT STARTED.

THE CYCLE.

AS IF BEING WILLING TO *DIE* FOR ONE ANOTHER WAS THE ONLY WAY WE WERE CAPABLE OF EXPRESSING LOVE.

THROOOM

I WOULD DIE FOR CLINT BARTON.

I *HAVE* DIED FOR CLINT BARTON.

WE DON'T HAVE LONG. YOU MAY HAVE ***STUNNED*** HIM, CLINT, BUT DAMON ***WILL*** GET BACK UP.

THERE'S A BACK EXIT BY THE--

NAT?! GET DOW--

I HAVE ***BETRAYED*** MY ***COUNTRY*** FOR CLINT BARTON.

THOOM

I HAVE HARMED PEOPLE I CARE ABOUT FOR CLINT BARTON.

-KOFF-

NOT THIS WALKING *TOOL BENCH* AGAIN...

I TOLD YOU WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU STAYED, HAWKEYE.

CLINT BARTON AND NATASHA ROMANOFF...

...YOU ARE BOTH GUILTY OF TREASON.

BUT I REALIZE NOW THAT WE AREN'T REPEATING A CYCLE OUT OF *DEVOTION*.

MY LAST THERAPIST TOLD ME WE REPEAT CYCLES BECAUSE WE ARE *BROKEN* PEOPLE

OKAY SHE DIDN'T USE THE WORD *BROKEN*... I READ BETWEEN THE LINES

WHAT SHE *DID* SAY WAS THAT PEOPLE OFTEN REPEAT CYCLES BECAUSE THEY ARE *COMFORTABLE*

EVEN IF THE OUTCOME IS BAD THE *PREDICTABILITY* MAKES US FEEL LIKE WE HAVE *CONTROL* OVER OUR LIVES

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT ALL THAT... BUT I *DO* KNOW WHAT'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN *RIGHT NOW*

I *KNOW* NATASHA IS HERE

WELL BEFORE THE SCREAMING STARTS

DAMON WAS RIGHT

ARRGH!

ALL THESE YEARS... ALL THESE ADVENTURES... AND PEOPLE CAN *GUESS* OUR MOVES

I MEAN SURE *MAYBE* I GET A NEW TRICK ARROW OR NATASHA ADOPTS AN *ALIEN SYMBIOTE*

BUT MAYBE WE ARE A BIT BEHOLDEN TO A *ROUTINE*

DINNER AT SIX. WATCHING OUR TELEVISION PROGRAMS AT SEVEN. IN BED BY NINE

OCCASIONALLY WHEN WE FEEL LIKE BEING *REALLY* WILD WE PARTAKE IN THE *EARLY-BIRD* SPECIAL AT THE CORNER RESTAURANT

OH NO

I THINK WE'RE *OFFICIALLY OLD*

WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH YOU, CLINT?

SHE ASKS FOR THE MILLIONTH TIME SINCE I MET HER

NEXT SHE'S GOING TO TELL ME TO USE THE *TWO* BRAIN CELLS I HAVE LEFT

NEXT TIME, WHY DON'T YOU USE THE *TWO* BRAIN CELLS YOU HAVE LEFT TO *NOT* GET YOURSELF KIDNAPPED?

YAHTZEE!

YOU KNOW THIS IS A *TRAP*, RIGHT?

OBVIOUSLY.

I AM SORRY, NAT. I DIDN'T MEAN FOR...

I WASN'T THINKING *CLEARLY.*

OBVIOUSLY.

KLAVK

BUT THERE'S SOMETHING I *NEED* YOU TO SEE.

SOMETHING I *SHOULD* HAVE SHOWN YOU EARLIER.

USE THE SYMBIOTE. IT'S BETTER IF I *SHOW* YOU.

ARE YOU SURE? I KNOW YOU HAVEN'T... *LOVED* THE IDEA OF THE SYMBIOTE.

IT'S OKAY, NAT. I UNDERSTAND NOW...

...AND I *NEED* YOU TO KNOW THE *TRUTH.*

I CAME TO MADRIPOOR TO FOLLOW *MARCUS KOLLER,* THE HEAD OF K.R.V. TECH...

"...ONE OF THE WORLD'S *LARGEST* AND FASTEST GROWING WEAPONS MANUFACTURERS.

"WHEN KOLLER FIRST ARRIVED IN MADRIPOOR, A SOURCE CONTACTED ME SAYING SOMETHING WASN'T RIGHT...

"...KOLLER WAS TAKING MEETINGS WITH AN UNKNOWN PATRON, AND, SUDDENLY, K.R.V. STOCK WAS *SKYROCKETING.*

"KOLLER WAS MAKING MOVES, AND I DIDN'T NEED MORE THAN TWO BRAIN CELLS TO KNOW THAT THOSE MOVES WERE MOST LIKELY *ILLEGAL.*

"BUT WHAT I *DIDN'T* KNOW...

"...WAS THAT FOLLOWING KOLLER WOULD LEAD ME RIGHT TO THE *RESURRECTED* AND *UGLIER-THAN-EVER* DAMON DRAN.

"WITH DRAN'S HELP, KOLLER SIGNED *TWO* MULTIBILLION-DOLLAR CONTRACTS WITH TWO DIFFERENT COUNTRIES...

"...SPOILER ALERT: THOSE COUNTRIES ARE THE U.S. AND RUSSIA.

"AND KOLLER AND DAMON'S *GRAND* PLAN...?"

START A *WAR* BETWEEN THE U.S. AND RUSSIA BY MAKING IT *LOOK* LIKE THE U.S. ASSASSINATED A RUSSIAN DIPLOMAT.

A WEAPONS COMPANY DOESN'T PROFIT WHEN THERE'S *PEACE.*

EXACTLY. AND DAMON WAS CONTRACTED TO MAKE A PERCENTAGE OF THE SALES. A VERY *LARGE* PERCENTAGE...

SO, YOU *DIDN'T* SHOOT THE AMBASSADOR.

I *DID* SHOOT THE AMBASSADOR, NAT.

"BUT I DIDN'T *KILL* HIM."

I WAS *TOO* LATE.

I THOUGHT THEY WOULD KILL THE AMBASSADOR OUT IN THE OPEN ON THE DAY OF THE SPEECH... BUT THEY POISONED HIM THE *MOMENT* HE ARRIVED ON U.S. SOIL.

WHEN I REALIZED WHAT WAS HAPPENING...

IF THEY CAME AFTER *ME*, THEN THEY *WOULDN'T* GO AFTER EACH OTHER.

YOU SHOT THE AMBASSADOR TO *FRAME* YOURSELF...

...TO STOP A *WAR.*

A *NOBLE* SACRIFICE...

...THAT ULTIMATELY DOES NOTHING BUT *DELAY* OUR PLANS.

THE AMERICAN AND RUSSIAN PEACE *WILL* DETERIORATE.

AS I TOLD YOU EARLIER, SOME CYCLES JUST CAN'T *HELP* BUT REPEAT THEMSELVES.

AND *BEFORE* YOU MAKE YOUR PREDICTABLE THREATS OF VIOLENCE TOWARD ME...

CLICK

SKREEEEEEEEE

...I SEEM TO HAVE DISCOVERED BOTH OF YOUR *WEAKNESSES* TO *SOUND.*

"IRON MAN HAS *NO* WEAKNESSES..."

...I'VE TRIED EXPLOSIVES, RESTRAINTS AND EVEN *RUST*, BUT NOTHING KEEPS HIM *DOWN*.

SKREEEEEEEEEE

NATASHA!

I HAVE AN IDEA. BUT I NEED YOU TO *TRUST* ME, CLINT.

I NEED YOU...*UNGH*... TO TRUST...

...THE *SYMBIOTE*...

SKREEEEEEEEE

NATASHA, WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH MY *ARROW*--?

THE SYMBIOTE... WHAT IS IT--?

SKEEEEEEEEE

HRGN!

YOU TRAITOR!

NAT... WHAT ARE YOU--?

YOU HAVE *BETRAYED* ME, ARCHER!

I *WILL* GET MY REVENGE... ON *ALL* OF YOU!

FWSSSSSSH

SKREEEEEEE

ZZAP

KRZZZP

CLINT, THE SYMBIOTE SHOULD BE ABLE TO FOCUS NOW WITHOUT THE--

UNGH!

THIS IS MY FAVORITE PART OF OUR DANCE, WIDOW.

NATASHA...

...DUCK.

KRZZZAP

HNNNP

THUNK

"I MISJUDGED YOU, HAWKEYE."

YOU WERE PLAYING THE BLACK WIDOW THIS ENTIRE TIME...

...I MIGHT JUST HAVE A TALK WITH THE AVENGERS ABOUT WHAT YOU DID HERE TONIGHT.

NATASHA ROMANOFF MAY HAVE GOTTEN AWAY...

"...BUT YOUR ACTIONS HAVE REVEALED WHAT SIDE YOU'RE TRULY ON."

THE SYMBIOTE LOOKS *GOOD* ON YOU, CLINT.

AS *COOL* AS AN ALIEN-GOOP BOW AND ARROW IS--AND IT IS *REALLY, REALLY* COOL--I AM *NOT* KEEPING THIS THING.

AND *YOU* ARE LEAVING. NO ONE WILL *EVER* KNOW YOU WERE HERE...

...I'LL GO TO THE U.S. AUTHORITIES... TURN MYSELF IN AND--

ENOUGH. IT'S TIME WE RETIRE THE ACT OF MARTYRDOM.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY SOMETHING NEW?

WHAT DO YOU HAVE IN MIND, ARCHER?

NATASHA ROMANOFF, WOULD YOU DO ME THE HONOR OF ACCOMPANYING ME BACK TO AMERICA TO FACE WHATEVER CONSEQUENCES COME OUR WAY?

I'VE GOT NOTHING BETTER TO DO.

THE END.

IN THE *NECK--!*

OH, STOP *SHRIEKING*, KANG, YOU *BABY!*

AH!

ADAM HUGHES

#1 VARIANT

STANLEY "ARTGERM" LAU
#1 VARIANT

GEORGE PÉREZ
& ALEX SINCLAIR
#1 VARIANT

MARK BROOKS
#1 HEADSHOT
SKETCH VARIANT

MARK BROOKS
#1 HEADSHOT
VARIANT

JESÚS SAIZ

#2 VARIANT

MARVEL

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BLACK WIDOW & HAWKEYE

FEATURING THE CURSE OF HAWKEYE

NEW! HER NAME IS NATASHA! SHE IS-- BLACK WIDOW!

FEARFUL SECOND ISSUE!

SPECIAL SHOCK FEATURE: THE MANY LIVES OF THE LORD OF VAMPIRES!

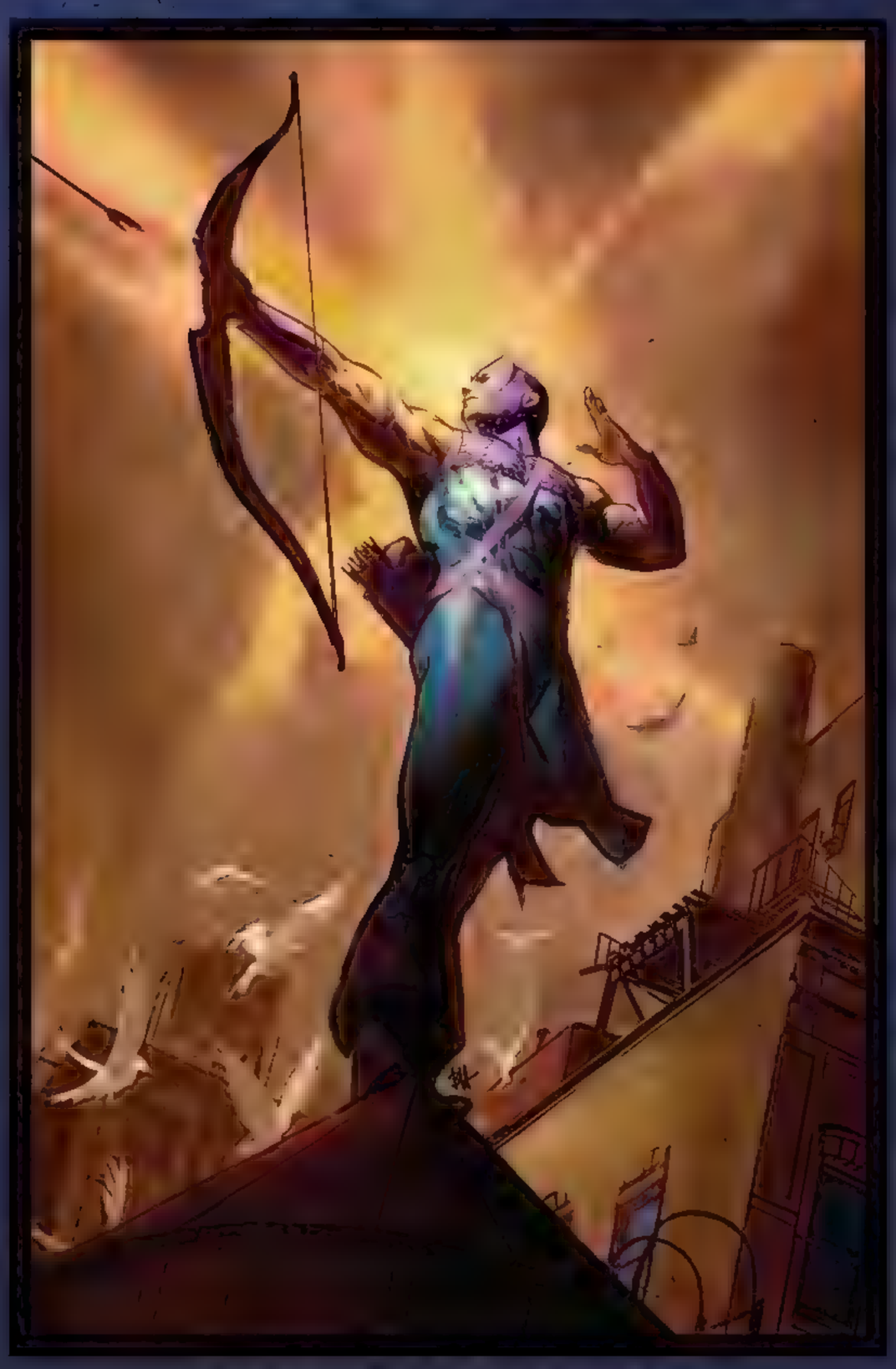
CARNERO MW AFTER ROMITA

CARMEN CARNERO & MATTHEW WILSON

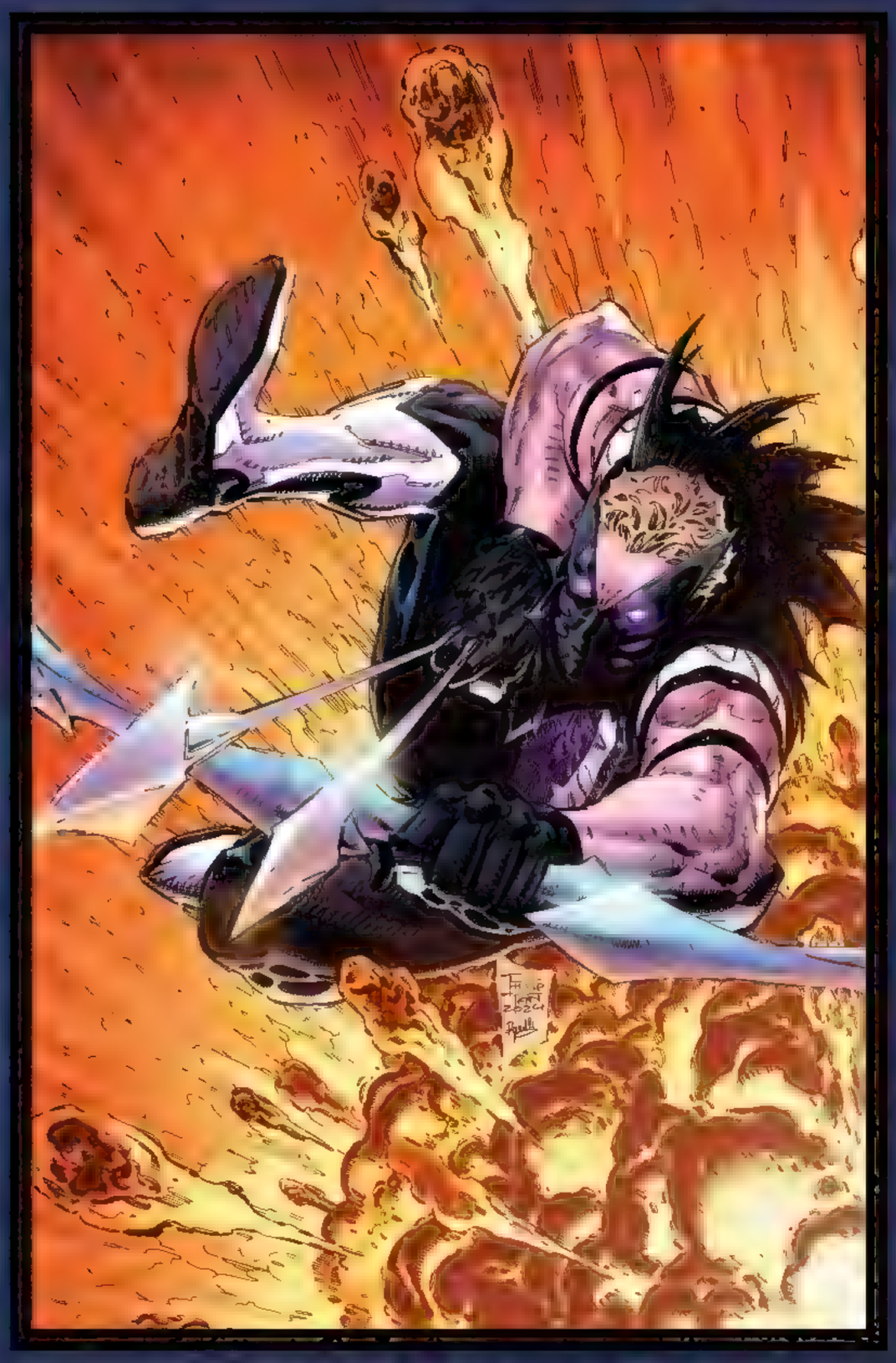
#2 VAMPIRE VARIANT

AKA
#2 VARIANT

TODD NAUCK & RACHELLE ROSENBERG
#2 WINDOWSHADES VARIANT



BEN HARVEY
#3 VARIANT



PHILIP TAN &
RACHELLE ROSENBERG
#3 BLACK COSTUME VARIANT

SKOTTIE YOUNG
#4 BIG MARVELS BLACK
AND WHITE VARIANT

SKOTTIE YOUNG
#4 BIG MARVELS
VARIANT

MARVEL COMICS GROUP 12¢
52 APR.
TALES OF SUSPENSE
IND.
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
"the CRIMSON DYNAMO STRIKES AGAIN!"
AND NONE, BUT
IRON MAN
CAN HOPE TO STOP HIM!
INTRODUCING: THE GORGEOUS NEW MENACE OF... THE BLACK WIDOW!

TALES OF SUSPENSE #52 (1964)

The Black Widow finds herself in the middle as Iron Man and Crimson Dynamo test their mettle against each other!

IRON MAN "The CRIMSON DYNAMO" STRIKES AGAIN!"

INTRODUCING THE BREATH-TAKING BEAUTY OF THE MYSTERIOUS **BLACK WIDOW!**

I TRUSTED YOU... HELPED YOU!! AND NOW... YOU BETRAY ME!!

Another Smash Hit From The MARVEL AGE of COMICS!

PLOT BY: STAN LEE
STORY BY: N. KOROK
ART BY: DON HECK
LETTERING BY: S. ROSEN

QUESTION: DIDN'T IRON MAN REFORM THE CRIMSON DYNAMO BEFORE?
ANSWER: YES, HE DID!

QUESTION: SO HOW COME THEY'RE FIGHTING EACH OTHER AGAIN?
ANSWER: THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT... AND WE THINK YOU'LL LIKE WHAT YOU SEE...

LATE ONE NIGHT, IN THE MAIN RESEARCH PLANT OF ANTHONY STARK, MILLIONAIRE PLAYBOY AND TALENTED MUNITIONS MANUFACTURER, A STRANGE FIGURE APPEARS...

HE SILENTLY, MECHANICALLY MOVES TO THE TOP SECRET PROJECT OF THE VAST STARK EXPERIMENTAL ENTERPRISES...

I'VE PLEDGED MY BRAIN AND MY ENTIRE BEING TO FATHOM THE SECRET OF THE *LASER LIGHT*... I WILL NOT FAIL!

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE "LASER LIGHT" APPEARS IN PARALLEL PHOTON RAYS OF EQUAL FORCE, NOT DIFFUSED LIKE ORDINARY LIGHT! IF A WAY COULD BE FOUND TO HANDLE SUCH A DANGEROUS LIGHT *SAFELY*, IT WOULD BE THE PERFECT *WEAPON*... AS IT COULD BURN THROUGH ANYTHING!

WHILE IN HIS PRIVATE OFFICE, TONY STARK, CHECKING OVER HIS *IRON MAN* COSTUME, *SEES*...

I CAN REST EASY NOW! EVERY TRANSISTORIZED PART OF MY IRON MAN SUIT IS IN PERFECT WORKING ORDER! HMM...TOO BAD THOSE WHO QUESTIONED THE CRIMSON DYNAMO'S LOYALTY TO ME CAN'T SEE PROFESSOR VANKO *NOW*... WORKING DOWN THERE LONG AFTER EVERYONE ELSE HAS GONE!

THE MACHINE VIBRATES, AND SUDDENLY THE CRIMSON FIGURE BELOW IS BATHED IN A DEADLY, EERIE GLOW!

NOW, WITH MY CRIMSON DYNAMO COSTUME FOR PROTECTION, I'LL FIND OUT IF MY LASER RAY GUN IS SAFE TO USE!

OH, *NO!!* VANKO IS RISKING HIS LIFE...USING *HIMSELF* AS A *GUINEA PIG!!*

WITH SCANT SECONDS TO SPARE, STARK HURLS HIMSELF DOWN TOWARDS THE DANGEROUS LASER LIGHT RAY...

GOOD THING THERE'S NO ONE AROUND TO QUESTION WHY THE CAUTIOUS TONY STARK WOULD SUDDENLY TURN INTO A MAN OF *ACTION!*

THOSE RAYS ALMOST *DISINTEGRATED* YOU, PROFESSOR VANKO!! YOU MUSTN'T TAKE CHANCES LIKE *THAT!*

I'VE *FAILED!* I *STILL* HAVEN'T FOUND A WAY TO MAKE THE LASER LIGHT SAFE TO USE!

WHEN I VOLUNTEERED TO HELP YOU PERFECT A LASER LIGHT WEAPON, I THOUGHT, WITH MY VAST KNOWLEDGE, I COULD AID YOUR COUNTRY... PAY YOU BACK...PAY *AMERICA* BACK... FOR TREATING ME SO FAIR!

SURE YOU DID...AND WHAT'S MORE, YOU *WILL*, TOO...BUT WE'RE NOT SO DESPERATE THAT YOU MUST GIVE UP YOUR LIFE TO HELP!

EVEN MY SPECIALLY DESIGNED CRIMSON DYNAMO SUIT AFFORDED NO PROTECTION AGAINST THE DEADLY *LASER BEAMS*... I'LL HAVE TO START AGAIN... SOME *NEW* WAY...

THAT'S THE STORY OF OUR LIVES IN SCIENCE, VANKO...TRY AND TRY AGAIN! BUT MEANWHILE, I SUGGEST YOU ADD SOME ADDITIONAL LEAD COATING FOR PROTECTION... JUST IN CASE...

LEAVING PROFESSOR VANKO, TONY STARK THINKS BACK... BACK TO THE TIME WHEN VANKO, AS *THE CRIMSON DYNAMO*, WAS IN THE EMPLOY OF THE REDS... BEFORE *IRON MAN* DEFEATED HIM AND ENABLED HIM TO DEFECT AND WORK FOR AMERICA!

YOU'VE *BEATEN* ME, IRON MAN, BUT I SHALL DIE LIKE A *MAN!*

NO *NEED* FOR YOU TO DIE! AMERICANS ARE NOT MURDERERS! I HAVE AN OFFER TO MAKE TO YOU...

BUT, THOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY, IN A PRIVATE SCREENING ROOM, A SHORT PUDGY FIGURE IS FILLED WITH UNCONTROLLABLE RAGE!

THERE, EXCELLENCY! FROM THESE SECRET FILMS YOU SEE ABSOLUTE PROOF OF VANKO'S TREASON!

THE TRAITOR!! HE HAS JOINED THE AMERICANS! HE MUST BE *ELIMINATED!* STOP THE FILM!

THIS IS A JOB FOR *THE BLACK WIDOW*... AND THE MAN KNOWN AS... *BORIS!*

AND, A SHORT TIME LATER!

YOU SENT FOR ME, COMRADE LEADER?

AND YOU, TOO, BORIS! *COME HERE!* WALK AROUND THE DESK... I WANT TO *SHOW* YOU SOMETHING...

WALK AROUND??

BORIS DOES NOT *WALK AROUND* PUNY OBSTACLES...

...IT IS EASIER TO HURL THEM ASIDE... *SO!!*

THERE ARE YOUR *TARGETS!* THE AMERICAN MUNITIONS-MAKER, *STARK*, AND THE TRAITOR *VANKO!* BUT IT WILL ALSO BE NECESSARY TO DISPOSE OF STARK'S MIGHTY BODYGUARD... *IRON MAN!*

HMM...THAT ANTHONY STARK IS *HANDSOME* AS WELL AS WEALTHY! HE WILL MAKE AN INTERESTING ASSIGNMENT FOR THE BLACK WIDOW!

A FEW DAYS LATER, SOMEWHERE OFF THE SHORES OF LONG ISLAND, A POWERFUL ATOMIC SUBMARINE COMPLETES THE FIRST PART OF ITS MISSION...

MY ORDERS ARE TO WAIT ONE WEEK FOR YOU TO COMPLETE YOUR MISSION, COMRADES!

IT IS A WEEK I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO WITH PLEASURE, COMRADE COMMANDER! WE WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED OF OUR PROGRESS!

AND SHORTLY AFTERWARDS, AT STARK'S MUNITIONS PLANT IN FLUSHING, NEW YORK...

Y'KNOW, PEPPER, YOU SURE ARE LUCKY! OL' *HAPPY* IS WILLING TO TAKE YOU OUT! ALL YOU GOTTA DO IS SAY *WHEN!*

FINE, HAPPY! LET'S SAY ABOUT HALF-PAST *NEVER!* NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, SOME *FOREIGN VISITORS* ARE HERE TO SEE THE BOSS!

WAIT! WHOM SHALL I SAY IS CALLING?

DO NOT BOTHER! I SHALL INTRODUCE *MYSELF!*

I AM MADAME NATASHA AND THIS IS MY BROTHER, BORIS! HE TEACHES A SCIENCE CLASS IN THE UKRAINE! IT WOULD BE SO GOOD FOR HIS STUDENTS TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR GREAT AMERICAN TECHNOLOGY!

I'LL BE GLAD TO SHOW YOU AROUND PERSONALLY!

WHAT A *BEAUTY* SHE IS!

MINUTES LATER...

YOU'RE MUCH TOO LOVELY TO SPEND ALL DAY TOURING A DULL FACTORY! SUPPOSE WE LET *BORIS* CONTINUE THE TOUR HIMSELF WHILE WE HAVE DINNER TOGETHER?

YOU ARE MOST KIND! MY BROTHER IS REALLY MORE INTERESTED IN SUCH THINGS THAN I AM!

LATER, AT A SWANK SUPPER CLUB...

IT IS STRANGE TO FIND A MAN LIKE YOU SO DEDICATED TO SCIENCE, YET SO SOPHISTICATED AND CHARMING!!

IF THERE'S A *MOON* OUT, LADY, YOU'LL FIND OUT HOW *I* FEEL ABOUT *YOU*, TOO!

RIGHT THIS WAY, MR. STARK!

MEANWHILE, BORIS WAITS FOR HIS CHANCE TO DO THE KIND OF WORK HE DOES BEST...

HEY! NO VISITORS ALLOWED BEYOND THIS POINT, MISTER! CAN'T YOU READ?!!

SURE, SURE! I JUST DID NOT SEE THE SIGN!

THAT GUARD! WHERE DID HE SUDDENLY SPRING FROM?

RESTRICT AREA NO VISITOR

HE IS NOW GOING ON HIS ROUNDS, SO I SHALL GET ON WITH MY JOB! I KNOW VANKO MUST BE WORKING HERE... IN THIS RESTRICTED AREA!

FROM A SMALL CONTAINER, A MYSTERIOUS FLUID IS EJECTED... AND EATS ITS WAY THROUGH THE METAL DOOR...

AH! NOW IT HAS CREATED AN OPENING LARGE ENOUGH...

...FOR BORIS TO USE HIS STRENGTH!

CRUNCH

GREETINGS, PROFESSOR VANKO, FROM THE PAST!

BORIS!! YOU HERE? YOU ARE WASTING YOUR TIME! I AM FINISHED WITH THE KREMLIN! STAY AWAY FROM ME!

RIP!

I BRING YOU A MESSAGE FROM OUR GLORIOUS LEADER! YOU MUST HELP ME SABOTAGE STARK'S PLANT AND HIS NEW SECRET PROJECT! IF YOU DO, YOUR LIFE WILL BE SPARED!

NEVER! THE AMERICANS HAVE BEEN GOOD TO ME! I SHALL NEVER BETRAY THEM! I.. I'LL CALL THE GUARDS!

THERE WON'T BE TIME FOR YOUR GUARDS TO HELP YOU, VANKO! REMEMBER THIS LITTLE TOY? YOU INVENTED IT... FOR US! SO YOU KNOW WHAT IT CAN DO!

THE JET PARALYZER... I HAD FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT IT! I DESIGNED IT YEARS AGO...

AH! THE MAGNETIC ARTIFICIAL FIBERS ARE FORMING ... A VERY USEFUL INVENTION !!

OHHH... THE SPRAY!! I CANNOT RESIST... THE TENTACLES ARE SPREADING ... HOLDING ME... I'M HELPLESS!!

AND, AS THE POWERFUL RAY GUN TAKES EFFECT...

SO! NOW YOU ARE WRAPPED IN THE UNBREAKABLE NET! IT WAS A BRILLIANT INVENTION, VANKO! TOO BAD *YOU* HAD TO BE ONE OF ITS VICTIMS!

ONLY ONE MORE THING... I'LL START THIS LONG-PLAYING TAPE-RECORDING OF YOUR VOICE, TAKEN AT YOUR LAST LECTURE IN MOSCOW!

THEN, OUTSIDE THE LAB...

HEY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING WITH THAT *PACKAGE?*

DELIVERING IT FOR PROFESSOR VANKO...

YOU CAN CHECK WITH *HIM*, IF YOU WANT... ALTHOUGH HE MAY NOT LIKE BEING INTERRUPTED IN THE MIDDLE OF A LECTURE...

HUH? OH, YEAH... I CAN *HEAR* HIM... AND I KNOW THAT GUY'S TEMPER WHEN HE'S DISTURBED... OKAY, PAL... TAKE OFF!

AS SOON AS WE FIND THE PROPER WAY OF DEALING WITH...

LATER... AT A MIDNIGHT RENDEZVOUS...

WE RECEIVED YOUR SIGNAL! WHAT HAVE YOU *THERE?*

ONLY THE FIRST INSTALLMENT! TAKE GOOD CARE OF HIM AND KEEP HIM UNDER GUARD WHEN HE RECOVERS! I'LL BE BACK SOON WITH *ANOTHER!*

OUR LEADER SAID TO EXTERMINATE VANKO... NEVER DREAMING I COULD BRING HIM BACK *ALIVE!* I'LL BE A GREATER HERO NOW... AND MORE SO WHEN I'VE BEATEN STARK, AS WELL AS THE OVER-RATED *IRON MAN! THE BLACK WIDOW* AND *BORIS* CAN DEFEAT *ANYONE!!*

RETURNING SECRETLY TO THE PLANT, BORIS AGAIN SLIPS INTO VANKO'S LAB AND CAREFULLY DONS THE AWESOME SUIT OF THE CRIMSON DYNAMO...

THIS ELECTRIFIED SUIT WILL BE THE PERFECT DISGUISE FOR ME! NONE WILL SUSPECT THAT I AM NOT VANKO! AND NOW FOR *IRON MAN*... WHOSE DEFEAT WILL BE MY GREATEST TRIUMPH!

WITHOUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION, USING THE STARTLING POWER OF THE CRIMSON DYNAMO, BORIS BEGINS A ONE-MAN CAMPAIGN OF SABOTAGE FROM WITHIN STARK'S FACTORY...

THIS WILL SERVE A DOUBLE PURPOSE! IT WILL SLOW DOWN AMERICA'S DEFENSE PRODUCTION, AND MORE IMPORTANT, IT WILL BRING *IRON MAN* INTO THE OPEN WHERE I CAN *DESTROY* HIM, SO THAT HE CAN NEVER FRUSTRATE OUR PLANS FOR WORLD CONQUEST AGAIN!

CRACK!!

MOMENTS LATER...

IT'S TOO BAD YOUR VISIT HERE HAS TO END IN A FEW DAYS, MADAME NATASHA!

I FIND MYSELF REGRETTING IT, TOO! I SHALL *MISS* YOU!

AN URGENT MESSAGE, MR. STARK! I'M SORRY TO INTERRUPT...

AND SO...

IT WAS HAPPY! HE SAID I WAS *NEEDED!* THERE WAS A MYSTERIOUS EXPLOSION AT THE PLANT... AND NO SIGN OF VANKO...

STARK CANNOT FOOL ME! HE IS *WORRIED!* BORIS MUST HAVE STRUCK A TELLING BLOW!

DON'T COME ANY CLOSER! IT COULD BE *DANGEROUS!* I'LL HAVE TO *LEAVE* YOU HERE!

WHAT A GLORIOUS SIGHT! STARK'S PLANT IS AN INFERNO!

WHAT A COLD WOMAN SHE IS! SO *UNMOVED* BY ALL THIS EXCITEMENT!

GLAD YOU'RE BACK, BOSS! MAYBE *YOU* CAN GET THINGS UNDER CONTROL NOW! THE FIRE STARTED IN THE AREA OF VANKO'S LAB! BUT *HE'S GONE!*

KEEP *AT* IT, HAPPY! I'LL BE WITH YOU AS SOON AS I ATTEND TO SOMETHING!

MUST CHANGE INTO MY OTHER GUISE... THAT OF *IRON MAN!*

AND, SPLIT SECONDS LATER...

AND NOW TO FIND OUT WHAT'S *BEHIND* ALL THIS! AS ARMOR-PLATED *IRON MAN*, I CAN PLUNGE INTO THIS BLAZING INFERNO WITHOUT BURNING ALIVE!

LOOK! IT'S IRON MAN!

HE'S TOO LATE TO STOP THE DAMAGE... BUT HE STILL MAY BE ABLE TO SAVE THE REST OF THE FACTORY!

I'VE GOT TO FIND VANKO! HIS WORK WITH THE LASER LIGHT RAY MIGHT HAVE STARTED THIS!

SECONDS LATER...

THE CRIMSON DYNAMO! VANKO! THANK HEAVEN YOU'RE ALL RIGHT! FOLLOW ME! I'LL GET YOU OUT OF HERE!

IRON MAN, AT LAST! THE FOOL THINKS I'M VANKO!

CRASH!

WHAT'S WRONG? OH, YOU DON'T WANT TO LEAVE THE LASER RAY MACHINE, EH? OKAY, I'LL HELP YOU GET IT OUT OF HERE!

I'LL WAIT TILL HE LIFTS THE MACHINE! THEN BORIS SHALL STRIKE!

LET'S HOPE WE CAN SAVE IT IN TIME! IT WOULD TAKE YEARS TO REBUILD IF IT'S DESTROYED!

NOW'S MY CHANCE!.. WHILE HE'S COMPLETELY OFF-GUARD!

OHH!

A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO USE THE ELECTRICAL CHARGE VANKO PROVIDED IN THIS SUIT!

I'M BEING DRAINED OF MY TRANSISTOR POWER... VANKO! CAN IT BE!? HAVE YOU REALLY TURNED ON ME? WAS I MISTAKEN AFTER ALL?! UHH... GROWING WEAKER... B-BLACKING OUT...

HAH! THE MUCH-VAUNTED IRON MAN, HELPLESS ONCE HIS ELECTRICAL TRANSISTOR CIRCUITS ARE DAMAGED! WITHIN SECONDS HE'LL BE UNCONSCIOUS, AND THEN...

UNDER COVER OF THE THICK BLANKET OF SMOKE, I'LL ESCAPE WITH MY GREATEST PRIZE! AND IF I'M SEEN, THE FOOLS WILL THINK I'M RESCUING IRON MAN!

LATER, BACK AT THE SUB...

YOU SUBDUED *IRON MAN*, COMRADE? INCREDIBLE! ARE YOU SURE HE'S *TOTALLY HARMLESS?*

COMPLETELY, COMRADE COMMANDER! HE HAS RECEIVED ENOUGH ELECTRIC CURRENT TO DESTROY *TWENTY* MEN!

NOW IRON MAN IS HELPLESS AND LOCKED BEHIND DOORS OF PLATE STEEL! YOU NEED WORRY ABOUT HIM NO LONGER!

SO YOU SAY! BUT I HAVE HEARD *TOO MUCH* OF THIS MAN! I SHALL NOT RELAX UNTIL HE IS OFF MY SHIP AND SAFELY IMPRISONED IN THE HOMELAND!

CL ANK!

MOMENTS LATER...

WHAT A *HERO'S WELCOME* I SHALL RECEIVE WHEN I RETURN! NOW, THE FINAL DETAIL... THE BLACK WIDOW AND I WILL EASILY FINISH OFF ANTHONY STARK ...NOW THAT HIS IRON BODY GUARD CANNOT HELP HIM!

MEANWHILE, THE WEAKENED IRON MAN, DESPERATELY FIGHTING FOR HIS LIFE, SLOWLY RECOVERS CONSCIOUSNESS...

MY ELECTRIC POWER HAS BEEN SHORT-CIRCUITED... I'VE GOT TO RECHARGE SOMEHOW... BUT *HOW?* WHERE *AM* I.??

CAN'T WAIT MUCH LONGER... MUST FIND SOME ELECTRIC CURRENT TO REACTIVATE MY CIRCUITS!! WAIT... THAT LIGHT BULB... OVERHEAD...

SUMMONING ALL HIS REMAINING STRENGTH, IRON MAN SMASHES THE GLASS BULB, AND...

LUCKY I CARRY THIS SPARE EXTENSION CORD FOR ANY EMERGENCIES... AH... I CAN FEEL MY ENERGY... MY VERY LIFE FORCE ...FEEDING BACK ...

NOW, WITH THE FULL POWER OF IRON MAN, I CAN TEAR THIS PLACE APART, AND... *VANKO!!* WHAT HAVE THEY *DONE* TO YOU? SO IT WAS SOMEONE *ELSE* WHO STRUCK ME DOWN... I SHOULD HAVE *GUESSED!*

IN SECONDS, IRON MAN RIPS OFF THE SYNTHETIC WIRE MESH NET, FREEING VANKO! THEN, SLEDGE-HAMMER FISTS, AIDED BY POWERFUL TRANSISTOR FORCE, BATTER AN ESCAPE ROUTE RIGHT THROUGH THE STEEL SHELL OF THE SUB...

SMASH!

UNTIL... YOU DID IT, IRON MAN!! YOU FREED US! BUT...ARE YOUR SMALL FLYING JETS POWERFUL ENOUGH TO CARRY MY WEIGHT, TOO?

THEY'RE ULTRA-TURBO JETS, VANKO! THEY COULD LIFT AN ELEPHANT, IF NEED BE! THERE... WE'RE SAFELY OUT OF RANGE NOW!

THEY'VE ESCAPED! WE'LL PAY WITH OUR LIVES FOR THIS!

IT'S ALL MY FAULT FOR INVOLVING YOU IN MY PAST, IRON MAN! MY ENEMIES DO NOT GIVE UP EASILY!

THAT'S WHAT MAKES THEM DANGEROUS, VANKO, BUT WE'LL SHOW THEM WE CAN BE EQUALLY DANGEROUS!

THINKING HE'S DEFEATED YOU, BORIS WILL RETURN TO THE FACTORY TO DESTROY OUR LASER RAY WEAPON!!

BORIS! SO HE'S THE ONE!

IRON MAN... LOOK! MY CRIMSON DYNAMO COSTUME! IT MUST BE HIM!

YOU MUST BE CAREFUL! HE, TOO, IS A SCIENTIST...A MAN OF GREAT ABILITY... AND GREATER STRENGTH!!

NO, VANKO! THIS IS NO TIME FOR CAUTION!! I'VE RETURNED,

IRON MAN! HOW??

WE'LL PLAY TWENTY QUESTIONS, LATER, YOU TREACHEROUS SPY!! RIGHT NOW, WE'LL FIND OUT HOW GOOD YOU ARE WHEN I'VE GOT BOTH HANDS FREE!

CRASH

WHA..? SOMETHING'S WRONG! THE SAME ELECTRICAL THRUST I USED BEFORE ... IT HAS NO EFFECT!

NATURALLY! I'VE ALTERED MY FREQUENCY WAVE LENGTH! YOU CAN'T BEAT ME TWICE WITH THE SAME STUNT!

CRACKLE!

IT DOES NOT MATTER! I AM STILL POWERFUL ENOUGH TO DESTROY YOU WITH MY BARE HAN...OOOF!!

GUESS AGAIN, BORIS! I'M NO WEAKLING MYSELF!

FINISH HIM, IRON MAN, WHILE YOU CAN! YOU MUST... HE WILL NEVER GIVE UP!

CAN'T, VANKO! WE DON'T PLAY THAT WAY! HE'S HAD ENOUGH! WELL SEND FOR THE POLICE NOW!

BUT, DURING THOSE FEW SECONDS OF INDECISION, THE CRAFTY BORIS SECRETLY READJUSTS HIS OWN ELECTRIC WAVE LENGTH ... AND THEN ...

THAT'S WHY WE WILL BURY YOU... WE'RE NOT AS TRUSTING AS YOU!

HIS ELECTRIC CHARGE CAN AFFECT ME NOW! I WAS ASLEEP AT THE SWITCH!

AS IRON MAN, MOMENTARILY WEAKENED, REELS BACK, BORIS FOLLOWS UP HIS ADVANTAGE BY RESORTING TO HIS OWN BRUTE STRENGTH WHICH IS GREATLY INCREASED BY THE ELECTRIC POWER OF THE CRIMSON DYNAMO ARMOR...

NOW TO DESTROY YOU AS EASILY AS I WOULD A FLEA!

LITTLE OL' TRANSISTORS, IF I EVER NEEDED YOU... I NEED YOU NOW!

DESPERATELY APPLYING HIS OWN FULL-FREQUENCY POWER, IRON MAN ALSO GOES INTO ACTION AGAIN ...

I'LL BE BACK AS SOON AS I PUT THIS TOY OUT OF HARM'S WAY...THE INSTRUMENTS IN IT ARE TOO VALUABLE TO RISK IN OUR LITTLE GAME!

HE FLEW UP TO THE MACHINE!! TOOK IT FROM ME EFFORTLESSLY! NOW I REALIZE HOW TREMENDOUS HIS POWER IS!!

PLACING THE INVALUABLE DEVICE OUT OF HARM'S WAY, IRON MAN SPEEDILY *RETURNS* TO THE BATTLE!

ALL RIGHT, PLAYMATE! LET'S WRAP THIS UP FOR *KEEPS* NOW!

BUT, UNEXPECTEDLY, THE *BLACK WIDOW* REAPPEARS!

IT LOOKS LIKE THE END FOR BORIS! MUCH AS I DISLIKE THAT BRUTISH OAF, I'LL HAVE TO AID HIM *SOMEHOW*... SOME RUSE TO TRICK THE AMERICAN...

MADAM NATASHA! I MUST HAVE UNWITTINGLY PINNED HER UNDER THE MACHINE WHEN I SET IT DOWN!!

IRON MAN! HELP ME!!

GULLIBLE FOOL! IT *WORKED!*

I'LL GET IT OFF! *OHH!* A..A JET OF WATER ON MY BACK!! *BORIS*...HE'S SHORT-CIRCUITING ME!

I SHOULD HAVE *GUESSED!* THE TWO OF YOU..... YOU'RE WORKING TOGETHER!!

IT WILL TAKE JUST A SECOND TO GENERATE ENOUGH FORCE TO ELECTROCUTE YOU..TO FINISH YOU FOREVER!

BUT *VANKO*, AWARE OF IRON MAN'S DANGER, CATCHES THE ASSASSIN OFF GUARD...

I CAN'T DO MUCH...BUT IF I CAN JUST GIVE IRON MAN THE FEW SECONDS HE NEEDS...!

FOOL! IT'S LIKE A MOUSE ATTACKING A TIGER! YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH *NOTHING!*

SO! YOU FLEE! YOU ARE TOO SQUEAMISH TO WATCH AS I FINISH OFF IRON MAN, EH?

I HAVE *ONE* CHANCE LEFT...THE PROJECT THAT WAS TO HAVE BEEN MY SUPREME SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT...IT MAY *YET* SAVE IRON MAN!

YOU'VE WAITED *TOO LONG*, BORIS! THIS *LASER LIGHT PISTOL* WILL STOP YOU NOW...

YOUR BLUFF WON'T WORK, VANKO! I KNOW THE WEAPON IS NOT YET PERFECTED! IT WILL DESTROY THE ONE WHO *USES* IT AS WELL AS THE VICTIM! YOU WOULD NOT *DARE!*

ANOTHER SECOND... ALL I NEED...

NOW STAND ASIDE, VANKO! I SHALL ATTEND TO YOU ONCE IRON MAN IS DESTROYED!

NO, BORIS! YOU HAVE GONE TOO FAR! YOU THINK NO MAN WOULD GIVE UP HIS LIFE FOR AN IDEAL, DO YOU? YOU ARE WRONG!

I WOULD DARE ANYTHING FOR THIS COUNTRY... WHICH HAS BEEN SO GOOD TO ME!

WORDS! WORDS! NOW OUT OF MY WAY, OLD MAN!

NO! VANKO.. DON'T!

NOT JUST WORDS, BORIS... BUT DEEDS! IS THERE ANY MORE FITTING WAY TO GLORIFY MY GREATEST PROJECT THAN TO DESTROY AN ENEMY OF FREEDOM WITH IT?!!

NO!! YOU ARE MAD! YOU WILL DIE ALSO... STOP!!

BOOM!

I MUST ESCAPE IN THE CONFUSION! WE HAVE FAILED!

LATER...

POOR VANKO! HE SACRIFICED HIS LIFE TO PROVE HIS LOYALTY TO OUR NATION! HE SHALL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN!

THEN, AFTER RESUMING HIS TRUE IDENTITY AS ANTHONY STARK ...

HEY, BOSS! WE JUST GOT SOME HOT REPORTS ON THAT PHONY SISTER OF BORIS! SHE'S A REAL MATA HARI, CALLED THE BLACK WIDOW! WHY DON'T WE GO AFTER HER??

WHY BOTHER, HAPPY? SHE'S FAILED IN HER MISSION! WHERE CAN SHE GO? WHERE CAN SHE HIDE? IN A WAY, I PITY HER! ALL THAT BEAUTY OUTSIDE... BUT INSIDE... NOTHING!!

13

YET, WHAT OF THE BEAUTIFUL, DANGEROUSLY IRRESISTIBLE BLACK WIDOW? SHE IS STILL AT LARGE, ON SOME FOG-FILLED STREET IN SOME CROWDED CITY... LONELY... ABANDONED... ALWAYS HIDING! HER CONSTANT COMPANION... FEAR!

I MUST KEEP MOVING... I KNOW TOO WELL THE PENALTY FOR FAILURE!!

25¢ ROOMS

BAR

BUT, TIME IS LONG, AND UNENDING... AND FATE WORKS IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS! NEXT ISSUE THE BLACK WIDOW RETURNS, MORE DEADLY THAN EVER! SO DON'T MISS THE GREAT TALES OF SUSPENSE #53, WHERE ANOTHER THRILLING IRON MAN ADVENTURE AWAITS YOU! The End

MARVEL COMICS GROUP 12¢

57 SEPT

TALES OF SUSPENSE
featuring
THE POWER OF IRON MAN

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

IND.

HOW CAN ONE MAN WITH A STRANGE BOW AND ARROW HARM OL' SHELL-HEAD? DON'T TRY TO ANSWER TILL YOU'VE SEEN THE SENSATIONAL HAWKEYE→

WE THINK HAWKEYE IS SO TERRIFIC, WE PLASTERED HIM ALL OVER OUR COVER!!

WATCH THE SPARKS FLY WHEN HANDSOME Hawkeye TEAMS UP WITH THE BLACK WIDOW!

TALES OF SUSPENSE #57 (1964)

Can Hawkeye go toe-to-toe with Iron Man with nothing more than a bow and trick arrows?

IRON MAN FACES THE FANTASTIC THREAT OF: "HAWKEYE, The MARKSMAN!"

LOOK OUT, FELLA! YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO TAKE HOT SHOWERS ON COMPANY TIME!

WE HAVEN'T BEGUN A STORY WITH *IRON MAN* SAVING SOMEONE'S LIFE LATELY! SO LET'S DO IT *NOW!* IN THE HUGE WEAPONS FACTORY OF WEALTHY *TONY STARK*, A VAT OF MOLTEN STEEL ACCIDENTALLY TIPS TOWARDS A WORKMAN BELOW, WHEN *IRON MAN*, STARK'S PERSONAL BODYGUARD, LEAPS TO THE RESCUE! (AND ONLY *WE* KNOW THAT *IRON MAN* AND *STARK* ARE ONE AND THE SAME!)

WRITTEN BY: Smiling STAN LEE

ILLUSTRATED BY: Sparkling DON HECK

LETTERED BY: Sterling S.ROSEN

YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT NOW, PARKER! NEXT TIME BE CAREFUL WHERE YOU STOP TO TIE YOUR SHOE-LACE!

I SURE WILL, IRON MAN! *BOY!* AM I GLAD MR. STARK HAS *YOU* ON THE PAYROLL!

HEY, IRON MAN! GOT A *MINUTE?*

WHAT CAN I *DO* FOR YOU, HAPPY? SOMETHING WRONG IN THE FRONT OFFICE?

NAH, THIS IS *PERSONAL!* YOU'RE PRETTY CHUMMY WITH MR. STARK! HOW ABOUT ASKIN' HIM TO PUT IN A GOOD WORD WITH PEPPER FOR ME! SHE HASN'T GIVEN ME A *DATE* IN WEEKS!

LATER, IN STARK'S PRIVATE OFFICE...

WHY SHOULD I FEEL SO *JEALOUS* WHEN HAPPY TRIES TO DATE PEPPER?? AFTER ALL... *I* DON'T DARE GET SERIOUS ABOUT HER!

A MAN LIKE ME... WHOSE LIFE DEPENDS ON A TRANSISTOR-POWERED CHEST DEVICE KEEPING HIS INJURED HEART BEATING, CAN'T VERY WELL ALLOW *ROMANCE* TO ENTER HIS LIFE!

AND SO, TONY STARK BEGINS TO SPEAK TO HIS LOVELY SECRETARY...

PEPPER, I HAVE SOMETHING TO *ASK* YOU! IT'S ABOUT A *DATE*...

A *DATE??*

OH, MR. STARK! I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK YOU'D *NEVER* NOTICE ME! I'M SO *THRILLED!*

WAIT! LET ME *EXPLAIN!*

WHAT'S THERE TO *EXPLAIN?* YOU ASKED ME FOR A DATE... AND I SAY *YES!!* NOW LET'S SEE... WHAT WILL I WEAR...?

BUT-- I WAS SPEAKING FOR *HAPPY!*

'SCUSE ME, BOSS! I... DIDN'T MEAN TO... INTERRUPT!

HAPPY...!

LATER THAT NIGHT, ON THE MIDWAY AT *CONEY ISLAND*...

THIS ISN'T THE *STORK CLUB*...BUT AT LEAST I'M ON A DATE WITH TONY STARK!

I DON'T DARE *TRUST* MYSELF TO TAKE HER TO ANY PLACE MORE ROMANTIC THAN *THIS!*

HURRY! HURRY! HURRY!

STEP RIGHT UP, FOLKS! SEE *HAWK-EYE*, THE WONDER OF THE AGE! THE WORLD'S GREATEST *MARKSMAN!*

THIS IS *PERFECT!* AT LEAST IT'LL KEEP HER FROM SUGGESTING A RIDE IN THE TUNNEL OF LOVE!

BIG DEAL! SO HE *HIT* THE TARGET!! WHAT A CRUMMY ACT!

C'MON! GET THAT BUM OFF THE STAGE AND BRING ON THE *DANCIN' GIRLS!*

BUT THE EVENING IS DESTINED TO BE MORE NERVE-WRACKING THAN ANYONE SUSPECTS! FOR, AT THAT VERY MOMENT...

HELP!! GET US *DOWN* FROM HERE!!

THE *FLYING PINWHEEL* IS OUT OF CONTROL! WE CAN'T *STOP* IT!

WHY DOESN'T SOMEBODY *DO* SOMETHING! IF THAT THING EVER BREAKS APART...!

THIS IS *TERRIBLE!* NOBODY CAN *STOP* IT IN TIME!

PEPPER... EXCUSE ME FOR A MINUTE!! I'VE GOT TO CALL THE FACTORY!!

AT A TIME LIKE *THIS!?*

BUT, AS TONY STARK HASTILY SLIPS AWAY...

SNAP!

HELP!! THE *GEARS* ARE *SHATTERING!!*

AND THEN...

I'M GLAD I BROUGHT MY SPECIAL ATTACHÉ CASE WITH ME FROM THE OFFICE! I WAS ABLE TO CHANGE TO *IRON MAN* IN SECONDS!

AND NOW, I'VE GOT TO FIND A WAY TO *STOP* THAT MACHINE, ALONE AND UNAIDED!

I'LL PUT THE FULL POWER OF MY ARMORED BODY AGAINST THE FLYING PINWHEEL! UHH CAN'T HOLD MUCH LONGER! THIS *HAS* TO DO IT!

FOR LONG GRUELLING SECONDS, THE MAN OF IRON HOLDS ON GRIMLY... KNOWING THAT HUMAN LIVES HANG IN THE BALANCE! AND THEN, SLOWLY, EXCRUCIATINGLY, THE GIANT MACHINE GRINDS TO A HALT...

IRON MAN *DID* IT! HE PREVENTED A DISASTER!!

BUT HOW DID HE GET HERE SO QUICKLY??

UH-OH! I'LL HAVE TO THINK OF AN ANSWER TO THAT ONE, FAST!!

I KNOW... I'LL TELL PEPPER I WENT TO FIND IRON MAN... I'LL SAY HE HAD ORDERS TO FOLLOW US TO CONEY ISLAND!

SHE'S SURE TO BELIEVE IT! MOST EVERYBODY THINKS IRON MAN ALWAYS TAGS ALONG BEHIND ME *ANYWAY!*

MEANTIME, THERE IS *ONE* OBSERVER WHO FEELS NO JOY AT WHAT HAS HAPPENED! THE ONLY EMOTION HE EXPERIENCES IS ONE OF BURNING, BLAZING *JEALOUSY!*

I'M THE GREATEST MARKSMAN THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN! AND YET, THEY *IGNORE* ME!!

WHY COULDN'T *I* DO ALL THE THINGS IRON MAN CAN DO?? ALL IT TAKES ARE A LOT OF MECHANICAL GIMMICKS... AND A COLORFUL COSTUME DISGUISE!

A SHORT TIME LATER, IN A BASEMENT WORKSHOP, THE BROODING MARKSMAN WORKS FEVERISHLY...

I'LL MAKE MYSELF A COSTUME THAT NO ONE WILL EVER BE ABLE TO FORGET!

AND SO, WE ARE ABOUT TO WITNESS THE CREATION OF ONE OF THE MOST START-LING ARCH-VILLAINS OF ALL TIME!!

NIGHT TURNS TO DAY, AND BACK TO NIGHT AGAIN, AND STILL THE FANATICAL MAN WORKS WITH A DESPERATE ZEAL...

BUT A COSTUME IS ONLY *PART* OF IT! I'LL NEED *WEAPONS!*

...AND WHAT *BETTER* WEAPONS THAN MY INFALLIBLE *ARROWS*?!!

EACH WITH A SPECIALLY-FITTED TIP OF ITS OWN!

NEVER AGAIN WILL PEOPLE SNEER AT MY "PERFORMANCE"!

AND NOW, INASMUCH AS MOST *OTHER* COSTUMED ADVENTURERS CHOOSE TO WEAR MASKS, *HAWKEYE* WILL DO THE SAME!

SO, LET *IRON MAN*... AND *EVERY* COSTUMED ADVENTURER LOOK TO HIS LAURELS!! FOR *HAWKEYE* IS ABOUT TO MAKE THEM ALL LOOK *SICK!*

ALTHOUGH I POSSESS NO SUPER-POWERS OTHER THAN MY UNFAILING *ACCURACY* AT TARGET SHOOTING, I CAN DO WHATEVER *OTHERS* CAN DO BY MEANS OF MY *ARROWS!*

FOR INSTANCE, IF I SHOULD WANT TO "FLY" TO THAT ROOF-TOP...

MY SUCTION TIPPED ARROW STICKS TO THE EXACT SPOT I AIM FOR, AND THEN...

...MY SPRING PULLEY DEVICE WHISKS ME TOWARDS THE ARROW TIP IN JUST SECONDS...

WHAT A *THRILL!!* I FEEL AS THOUGH THE DESTINY OF THE ENTIRE CITY BELOW ME IS IN MY POWERFUL GLOVED HANDS!

THIS IS ALMOST TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE! RIGHT BELOW ME...THAT FLEEING FOOL JUST ROBBED A JEWELRY STORE!

I CAN STOP HIM WITH MY EYES CLOSED!!

FOR THE LUVVA PETE!!

TWANG!

A PERFECT SHOT!! AS ALWAYS!!

NOW TO MAKE THE CAPTURE AND... *WHA..?* HE'S GETTING *AWAY!*

THAT'S WHAT I GET FOR TAKING PAINS NOT TO *INJURE* HIM!!

WELL, I'LL CATCH UP WITH HIM IN A MINUTE! FIRST, I'LL JUST INSPECT WHAT HE DROPPED!

NO *WONDER* HE RAN SO FAST! THIS IS QUITE A *HAUL!* DIAMONDS... RUBIES...

JUST THEN, AN IRONIC DEVELOPMENT OCCURS! ATTRACTED BY THE NOISE, THE *POLICE* ARRIVE, AND...

DON'T MOVE!! WE CAUGHT YOUR PARTNER, AND WE'VE GOT *YOU* DEAD TO RIGHTS!

THEY THINK I HELPED ROB THE STORE!

DROPPING THE STOLEN JEWELRY, *HAWKEYE* BEGINS A MAD DASH FOR FREEDOM AS THE OFFICERS TAKE UP THE CHASE...

THEY'D NEVER BELIEVE I'M INNOCENT! I'LL HAVE TO *RUN* FOR IT!

HALT... IN THE NAME OF THE LAW!

LOOK! HE DROPPED THE LOOT! WE'D BETTER PICK IT UP BEFORE SOMEONE HELPS HIMSELF TO IT!

AND, AS HAWKEYE TAKES ADVANTAGE OF THE MOMENTARY RESPITE...

THAT MAN... RACING SO SWIFTLY! HE MIGHT BE WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR!

WHY *RUN* WHEN YOU CAN *RIDE*!? SHUT THE DOOR BEHIND YOU!

JUST WHAT I *NEED*... A LIFT! BUT, WHY DID SHE *STOP* FOR ME..??

LOOK, LADY...I.. *WOW*!!

WHAT IS WRONG? IS SOMETHING THE *MATTER*?!

AS FATE WOULD HAVE IT, HAWKEYE SEES ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMEN IN THE WORLD...

...THE DARING, DAZZLING DANGEROUS *BLACK WIDOW*!!

LADY, WHOEVER YOU ARE, DON'T PINCH ME! THIS IS *ONE* DREAM I DON'T *EVER* WANT TO WAKE UP FROM!

I ASSURE YOU, MY COSTUMED FRIEND, THIS IS NO DREAM!

IF YOU ARE AS ADVENTUROUS AND POWERFUL AS YOUR APPEARANCE WOULD INDICATE, YOU MIGHT BE THE VERY *ALLY* I'VE BEEN SEEKING!

WHATEVER YOU'RE LOOKIN' FOR, GORGEOUS, YOU CAN BET YOUR BOTTOM DOLLAR... I'M *IT*!

THUS, SMITTEN BY THE BLACK WIDOW'S FATAL BEAUTY, THE MAN CALLED *HAWKEYE* ENTERS INTO A DRAMATIC ALLIANCE WHICH IS TO CHANGE THE COURSE OF BOTH THEIR LIVES, AND *IRON MAN'S* AS WELL! 7.

IN A LUXURIOUS SUBURB, JUST OUTSIDE THE CITY, THE BLACK WIDOW LEADS HAWKEYE THROUGH A LAVISHLY FURNISHED ESTATE UNTIL THEY REACH A STAIRWAY, LEADING TO A SUBTERRANEAN LABORATORY!

FOLLOW ME, HAWK-EYE!

TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH, GORGEOUS!

IT IS FORTUNATE THAT HE IS TAKEN WITH MY BEAUTY! I WILL BE ABLE TO TWIST HIM AROUND MY LITTLE FINGER! BUT HE MUST NOT LEARN THAT I AM REALLY A *RED SPY!*

SAY! THIS IS SOME GREAT *LAB* YOU'VE GOT HERE! BUT YOU DON'T *LOOK* LIKE THE SCIENTIST TYPE TO ME!

I'M *NOT!* THIS EQUIPMENT BELONGS TO THE ONE I RENT THIS HOME FROM! BUT THERE ARE THINGS HERE WHICH WILL INCREASE YOUR OWN POWERS!

MY COMMUNIST MASTERS PROVIDED THIS ESTATE FOR ME! AND *NOW* THEIR INVESTMENT SHALL REALLY PAY OFF!

MM... I SEE WHAT YOU *MEAN!* SOME OF THE DEVICES DESCRIBED IN THIS BOOK WOULD MAKE GREAT WEAPONS IF FITTED ONTO MY *ARROWS!*

BUT WHAT'S THE *ANGLE,* BEAUTIFUL? DO YOU HAVE ANY *DRAGONS* YOU WANT SLAIN, OR WHAT??

IN A WAY, *YES!!* THE FAMOUS *IRON MAN* IS A MORTAL ENEMY OF MINE! ANY MAN WHO COULD *DEFEAT* HIM WOULD BE A MAN I COULD LEARN TO LOVE!

HE'S AS GOOD AS *BEATEN,* BABY!

BUT, ONE THING MORE... NO HARM MUST COME TO HIS EMPLOYER, TONY STARK!

SO! SHE'S GOT A *CRUSH* ON STARK, EH? WELL... I'LL PUT A STOP TO *THAT!!*

MEANTIME, THE MAN IN QUESTION IS NOW BACK AT HIS SPRAWLING FACTORY, LITTLE DREAMING OF THE DANGER THAT AWAITS HIM...

POOR PEPPER! I'M AFRAID I DIDN'T SHOW HER A VERY GOOD TIME LAST NIGHT!

I GUESS THE *LEAST* I CAN DO IS TAKE HER OUT AGAIN... AND *THIS* TIME GIVE HER THE TYPE OF GLAMOROUS EVENING SHE MUST HAVE EXPECTED!

I'LL *DO* IT! I'LL ASK HER RIGHT *NOW!*

IN FACT, I MIGHT AS WELL BE *HONEST* WITH MYSELF! I'M NOT DOING IT ONLY FOR HER! *I'D* LOVE TO TAKE THAT FABULOUS FEMALE TO ALL THE BEST PLACES... TO LOOK INTO THOSE GORGEOUS LIMPID EYES OF HERS...

CAREFUL, STARK, OL' BOY! YOU'RE BEGINNING TO SOUND LIKE A FELLA IN *LOVE!*

OOPS! ALMOST FORGOT! CAN'T LET HER SEE ME LIKE *THIS!*

MINUTES LATER...

HMM! LOOKS LIKE I'M A LITTLE LATE!

PEPPER, THEY'VE GOT A GREAT NEW MURDER MYSTERY AT THE DRIVE-IN TONIGHT, AND I WAS WONDERIN'...?

WHY, HAPPY HOGAN! YOU BIG *SPEND-THRIFT*, YOU!

OH! MR. STARK JUST CAME IN! I'LL SHOW HIM HE'S NOT THE ONLY FISH IN THE SEA! EVEN A MURDER MYSTERY WOULD BE BETTER THAN OUR DATE LAST NIGHT!

WELL, IF YOU DON'T WANNA...

WHO *SAID* I DIDN'T WANT TO?!

I'D BE *DELIGHTED* TO GO TO THE DRIVE-IN MOVIE WITH YOU TONIGHT, HAPPY! IT'S CERTAINLY MORE ROMANTIC THAN BEING WALKED ALL OVER CONEY ISLAND WITH AN ICE CREAM CONE!

GRRREAT! I *KNEW* YOU COULDN'T RESIST MY CHARM MUCH LONGER!

WELL, I GUESS I *DESERVED* THAT!

MEANWHILE, A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY FROM STARK'S FACTORY...

NOW!

BULLSEYE! MY SILENT SUCTION-TIPPED ARROW WILL GET ME INSIDE STARK'S FACTORY IN SECONDS!

THIS IS ALMOST *TOO* EASY FOR HAWKEYE, THE MARKSMAN!

HI, CHARLIE! SEE THE BIG GAME ON T.V. LAST NIGHT?

YOU *BET!* A NO-HITTER... HOW *ABOUT* THAT?

LET'S GO, PETE! THEY'RE WAITING FOR THAT LOAD OF EQUIPMENT INSIDE!

THEN, ONCE THE SUPPLY TRUCK HAS PASSED THROUGH THE GUARDED ENTRANCE GATE...

SO FAR, SO GOOD! NOW I'LL START ENOUGH OF A RUCKUS TO BRING *IRON MAN* ON THE RUN!

THE DOOR TO THE MAIN PART OF THE FACTORY IS LOCKED AND BOLTED! SO I'LL JUST SHOW THEM THAT LOCKS MEAN *NOTHING* TO HAWKEYE THE MARKSMAN!

THWOCK!

THAT EXPLOSIVE ARROW-HEAD WHICH THE BLACK WIDOW HELPED ME RIG UP WORKS EVEN BETTER THAN WE THOUGHT!

BUT, BEFORE THE ECHO OF THE EXPLOSION HAS DIED AWAY, A JET-POWERED AVENGING *IRON MAN* STREAKS TO THE SCENE, SHOUTING A BRISK COMMAND TO THE FACTORY GUARDS WHO VAINLY TRY TO MATCH HIS BLAZING SPEED...

STAY *BEHIND* ME, MEN! IF THERE'S ANY DANGER, I'LL FACE IT FIRST!

STAY BEHIND?? WE COULDN'T CATCH THAT IRON WHIRL-WIND IF WE *TRIED!*

HERE HE *COMES!* THIS IS ALMOST LIKE SOME CORNY *FAIRY TALE!* ONCE I'VE POLISHED OFF THE BIG BAD IRON MAN, I'LL RETURN TO CLAIM THE FAIR DAMSEL'S HAND!

WHA...?! I'M BEING ATTACKED WITH ARROWS!! HOW CAN ANYONE EXPECT TO STOP ME WITH SOME MERE... WAIT A MINUTE!!

THERE'S SOME SORT OF CHEMICAL ON THE SUCTION TIPS!! IT HAS A RUSTING ACTION! MY ARMOR IS STIFFENING... IT'S GETTING HARDER TO MOVE!!

WHOEVER IS RESPONSIBLE HAS FOUND MY WEAK POINT! I CAN'T FIGHT RUST!!

I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY... SHED MY ARMOR BEFORE IT'S TOO RUSTY TO REMOVE!

RUNNING WON'T HELP YOU, IRON MAN! I KNOW YOU'RE HERE SOMEWHERE! YOU CAN'T ESCAPE HAWKEYE, THE MARKSMAN!!

SO THAT'S MY MYSTERIOUS ATTACKER!! WELL, HE GETS THE FIRST ROUND, BUT THE FIGHT ISN'T OVER YET! NO ONE TAKES ME BY SURPRISE TWICE!

BY THE TIME HAWKEYE REACHES THE SPOT WHERE IRON MAN HAD BEEN, ALL HE FINDS ARE ...

DISCARDED PIECES OF IRON MAN'S ARMOR! I'LL BRING THEM TO MY LAB AND ANALYZE THEM!

THE MAN WHO LEARNS ALL THE SECRETS OF IRON MAN'S ARMOR COULD BECOME ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL MEN!

WHILE, IN ANOTHER SECTION OF THE SPRAWLING PLANT...

THIS IS WHAT I'M AFTER!

I'M GLAD I HAD THE FORE-SIGHT TO CONCEAL *DUPLI-CATE* SUITS OF ARMOR FOR MYSELF IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE FACTORY!

MOVING WITH INCREDIBLE SPEED, LIKE A MAN POSSESSED, A FIGHTING-MAD TONY STARK DONS HIS AWE-SOME ARMOR... EXCEPT FOR...

MY *RIGHT BOOT* ASSEMBLY! IT'S *MISSING!!* I'D BE TOO *VULNERABLE* WITHOUT IT!!

I MUST *FIND* IT, BEFORE HAWKEYE FINDS *ME!*

FRANTICALLY HE SEARCHES NEAR-BY AREAS, UNTIL HE REMEMBERS...

OF *COURSE!* IT NEEDED REPLATING! I LEFT IT HERE AFTER IT WAS FINISHED, WAITING TILL EVERY-ONE WAS GONE BE-FORE I'D TAKE IT!

THAT *DOES* IT! NOW, I'VE GOT TO GO AFTER THE MARKSMAN BEFORE HE GETS TOO BIG A HEAD START! I HEARD A CAR SPEED AWAY JUST ABOUT TWO MINUTES AGO!

I HAD *WONDERED* HOW I'D SPEND THE EVENING WHILE PEPPER AND HAPPY WERE AT THE MOVIES! IT LOOKS AS THOUGH *FATE* SOLVED THAT LITTLE PROBLEM FOR ME!

THERE'S ONLY ONE CAR ON THE ROAD AT THIS HOUR, RACING AWAY FROM MY FACTORY! THAT MUST BE *HAWKEYE*, HEADING TOWARDS LA GUARDIA AIRPORT!

WHO CAN HE *BE*? WHERE DID HE *COME* FROM?? IT SEEMS THAT EVERY MASKED, UNUSUAL CRIMINAL IN THE EAST TRIES TO ATTACK MY WEAPONS FACTORY SOONER OR LATER! EVERY TIME I TURN AROUND I'M MENACED BY SOME CRACKPOT OR SPY!

WELL, THE FIRST THING TO DO IS STOP HIS CAR!

ZZZ

BUT MY TRANSISTORS WON'T POWER THE REPULSER BEAM *FOREVER!* I'VE GOT TO TRY A SURPRISE ATTACK OF MY OWN!

I'LL BEAT HIM *SOME-HOW!* I CAN'T FAIL THE GORGEOUS BLACK WIDOW!

FIRST, I'LL FLY UP OUT OF RANGE OF HIS ARROW! NOW, I'LL SET MY FLYING JETS FOR *TOP SPEED*, AND TRY A *POWER DIVE!*

IT WON'T WORK! HE'S FASTER THAN I THOUGHT! HE'S PREPARING TO SHOOT A *DIFFERENT* TYPE OF ARROW AT ME!! BUT WHAT KIND *IS* IT??

NOW I'VE GOT YOU!!

STRONG NYLON ROPE STRANDS!! TANGLING ME UP!! CAN'T REPULSE THEM IN TIME!!

BUT, NOT FOR NOTHING IS IRON MAN'S *MIGHT* SPOKEN OF IN HUSHED TONES BY THE UNDERWORLD! WITH AN IRRESISTIBLE SURGE OF POWER, HIS TRANSISTOR-AIDED MUSCLES FLING HIS ARMS APART, THUS SNAPPING THE STRANDS BEFORE THEY CAN TIGHTEN!

HE BROKE FREE!! WHAT'S HE TRYING *NOW*??

I'VE GOT TO HIT THE PIER WITH JUST ENOUGH FORCE!

I DID IT!

WHAM!

RIP!

WHAT GOT *INTO* HIM?? HE'S LIKE AN AVENGING TORNADO!!

LOOK OUT! STOP! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!!

JUST TRYING TO KEEP YOU FROM GETTING *BORED*, ROBIN HOOD!

TWANNG!

OH, *NO* YOU DON'T!! YOU CAN'T ESCAPE ME BY *DROWN-ING!* YOU'VE GOT TOO MUCH *EX-PLAINING* TO DO!!

BUT A PAIR OF THE MOST GLAMOROUS EYES IN THE WORLD ARE *ALSO* WATCH-ING THE GRIM TABLEAU FROM A HIDING PLACE NEARBY...

I WAS TO PICK HIM UP HERE AFTER HIS VICTORY... A VICTORY WHICH NEVER TOOK PLACE!!

BUT THEN, THINKING THE BATTLE WON, THE GOLDEN AVENGER MAKES HIS MOST SERIOUS MISTAKE... TURNING HIS BACK ON HAWKEYE...

WHILE HE'S UNCONSCIOUS, I'LL GO TO HIS CAR AND RETRIEVE THE PIECES OF MY OTHER SUIT OF ARMOR!

---AS THE MUFFLED PADDING OF IRON MAN'S HEAVY FEET FADES AWAY...

HE'S GONE!!

NOW IS MY CHANCE TO FINISH HIM OFF FOR GOOD!

NOW, WHEN HE LEAST EXPECTS IT!

I'LL USE MY MOST POTENT ARROW OF ALL...!!

...THE DEMOLITION BLAST WARHEAD WHICH THE BLACK WIDOW HELPED ME TO ASSEMBLE!!

AND NOW... FAREWELL, IRON MAN!! NOTHING CAN SAVE YOU NOW!

BUT, HAWKEYE IS *WRONG!* THERE IS ONE THING THAT *CAN* SAVE IRON MAN ... AND THAT IS THE PROTECTION OF THE STRONGEST, MOST SKILLFULLY MADE FLEXIBLE IRON ARMOR IN EXISTENCE, TEMPERED TO THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF RESILIENCY EVER ATTAINED BY ANY METAL!

WHOOM!

AND, ALTHOUGH THE DEMOLITION BLAST RICOCHETS HARMLESSLY OFF THE SHOULDER OF THE GOLDEN AVENGER, THE TREMENDOUS IMPACT IS HURLED AWAY IN ANOTHER DIRECTION .. RIGHT TOWARDS THE STARTLED *MADAME NATASHA*, BEFORE SHE CAN SAVE HERSELF!

OHHH!

HAWKEYE!! SAVE ME!

YOU!! WHAT HAVE I *DONE*?!

IGNORING THE STUNNED IRON MAN, THE ANGUISHED MARKSMAN RACES TO THE SIDE OF THE BLACK WIDOW!

SHE'S STILL BREATHING! I CAN'T LET HER DIE!!

HER BOAT IS WAITING! IF I CAN JUST MAKE IT TO A DOCTOR WITH HER BEFORE THE FOG ROLLS IN...!

SHE HAS TO LIVE!! SHE HAS TO BE *MINE*!! SHE'S THE ONLY ONE I'VE EVER LOVED!!

THEN, BY THE TIME IRON MAN HAS FULLY RECOVERED FROM THE EFFECTS OF THE STAGGERING BLOW...

HE'S TRYING TO ESCAPE IN THE FOG!! BUT HE WON'T GET FAR! THERE'S NO PLACE HE CAN FLEE TO THAT I CAN'T FOLLOW WITH MY POWER JETS!!

IT'S HARD TO BE CERTAIN IN THE HAZE, BUT I SEEM TO SEE A *GIRL* IN THE BOAT... SHE LOOKS VAGUELY FAMILIAR ... BUT IT'S SO FAR AWAY!

WELL, I'D BETTER TAKE OFF *AFTER* THEM...!!

RRRR

NO! I CAN'T! I ALMOST FORGOT! I'M AT THE EDGE OF LA GUARDIA AIRPORT!

WHIRRRR

I DON'T *DARE* GET AIRBORNE.. I'D BE A MENACE TO THE PLANES TAKING OFF AND LANDING!

AND SO, THE IRON CLAD AVENGER RETURNS TO HIS FACTORY ON LONG ISLAND SOUND, AND, IN THE PRIVACY OF HIS LOCKED OFFICE, PREPARES TO BECOME WEALTHY, HANDSOME TONY STARK AGAIN ... NEVER SUSPECTING HOW CLOSE HE HAD BEEN TO HIS FORMER ARCH-FOE, MADAME NATASHA, BETTER KNOWN AS THE BEAUTIFUL BUT DEADLY ***BLACK WIDOW!***

PEPPER AND HAPPY MUST, STILL BE AT THE MOVIES! NOBODY'S HERE EXCEPT THE SKELETON NIGHT SHIFT! NOTHING MORE *I* CAN DO NOW, EXCEPT WAIT FOR MORNING!

THUS, ONE OF THE WEALTHIEST MEN IN THE WORLD SLOWLY TRUDGES THROUGH THE SAND OUTSIDE HIS WORLD-FAMOUS WEAPONS FACTORY! NOT DARING TO CONFESS HIS LOVE TO THE GIRL HE CARES FOR ... NOT KNOWING WHEN THE MECHANICAL CHEST DEVICE HE WEARS WILL FAIL ENDING HIS LIFE IN AN INSTANT...

NOR DOES HE KNOW WHEN OR WHERE HIS NEXT DEADLY THREAT WILL COME FROM! THIS IS TONY STARK, RICH, HANDSOME, SUCCESSFUL TONY STARK ... ONE OF THE MOST TRAGIC HEROES THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN!

The End

NOTE: FOR THE THRILLING "ORIGIN OF IRON MAN" DON'T MISS "MARVEL TALES ANNUAL"... NOW ON SALE!

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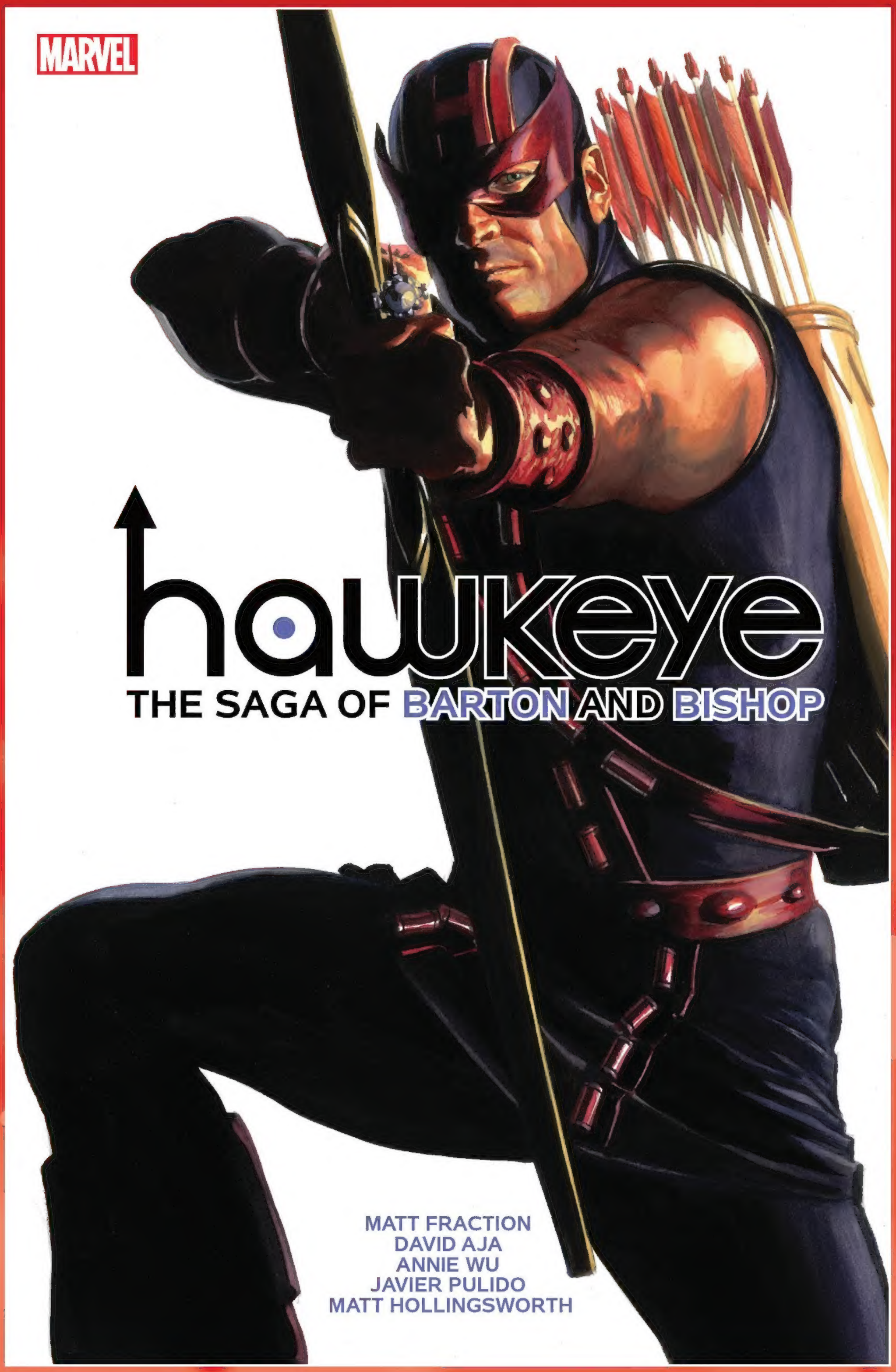

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